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TRAVELOGUES
CHINA
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BURTON HOLMES TRAVELOGUES

With Illustrations from Photographs By the Author

VOLUME THREE

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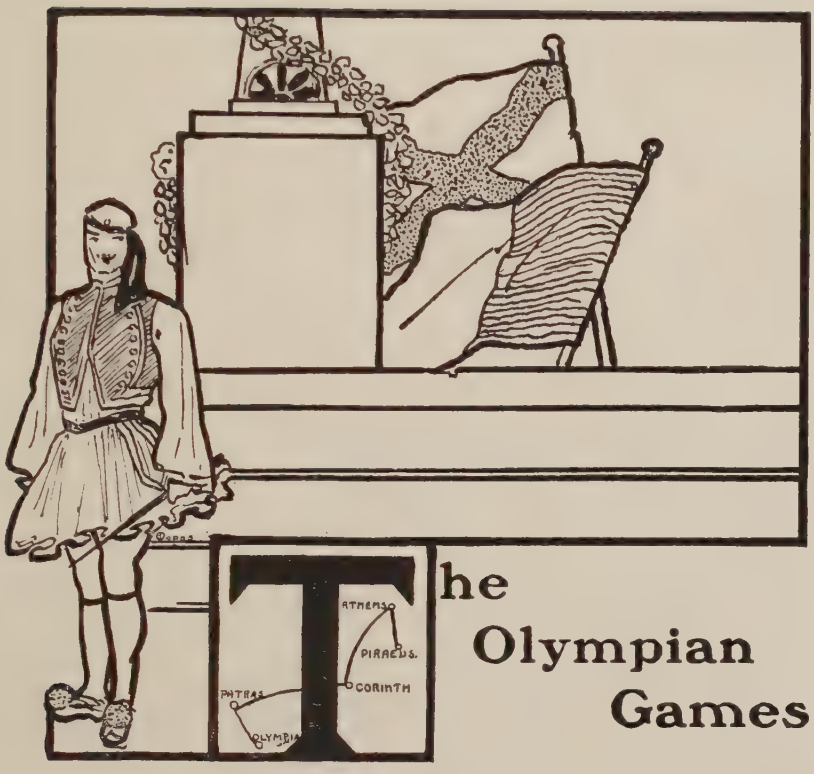
THE OLYMPIAN GAMES IN ATHENS



The Olympian Games

IT IS a mistaken belief that he who knows not ancient Greece, as revealed in the immortal works of poetry, philosophy and art, he who has not spent his life in the companionship of the Greek classics, he who cannot in his own soul realize the Greece of old, is not fitted to approach her shores. The Olympian Games were the excuse for my intrusion into the land of the scholar and the archæologist. I knew too well that I would bring to Greece only a love of travel, an eye not wholly blind to beauty, and a deep respect for the history, the letters, and the art of Greece.

While to the student of antiquity Greece offers a larger reward than to any other , for every one she has gifts according to the worth of his mental capacities; and even upon him who, empty-handed, humbly bows before her, she bestows an ample recompense — the power to appreciate and to enjoy her natural charm. Let no one therefore hesitate to visit Greece. Pallas Athene is no longer stern ; she asks of the children of the present century, not that they sacrifice to her upon the altar of unceasing study, but only that they bring to her hearts rightly tuned, eyes alive to form and color, souls in which dwells the love of loveliness. She asks no more than that which almost every one of us can offer.

ON THE ADRIATIC

AN ALBANIAN PORT

Let us, then, without a classical dictionary, without our Homer or our Plato, set forth upon a strictly modern Odyssey.

The shortest way to Greece is from New York to Naples by the Mediterranean route, thence across smiling Italy to Brindisi, and thence in steamers of the Austrian Lloyd to Patras on the western coast of Greece. In nine days we reach Gibraltar, three days later we are in the busy streets of Naples, next night upon the quay of Brindisi, whence we are to cross the Adriatic. And it was with supreme satisfaction that I found myself on the waters of that Adriatic Sea, on which, six years before, I had looked so wistfully from the Venetian towers.

East of Italy I had never been before ; the land which lay before me possessed that charm which ever hovers over the unknown. In the early morning we sight the Albanian coast, then still held by the Turk. For hours we steam south, a wall of barren mountains, grim and cold, upon our left. The land looks desolate and uninhabited, but later our steamer enters a little bay and anchors at a Turkish port, a desolate pile of ruins, near which rise a few new buildings and a custom-house. Albanian shepherds now embark. They introduce us to the Orient. We now feel that our journey has in reality begun. We now for the first time hear Turkish dialects ; while the speech of modern Greece also falls on our ears like a sweet though distorted echo from the past. But

ALBANIANS

THE ARCHIMANDRITE

we still hear the languages of the Occident — French, Italian, and English. An interesting specimen of Hellenized English may be found in the cabin of the steamer. The rules and regulations are printed in four languages. The following are extracts from the column intended for the edification of English-speaking passengers: "It is prohibited to any passenger to meddle with the command and direction of the vessel, the Captain being the only responsible person." This is not very reassuring, but the awful thought that all the engineers, the sailors, and especially the cooks are irresponsible, is forgotten in our admiration of the elegance of regulation No. 12. It reads, "Passengers having a right to be treated like persons of education will no doubt conform themselves to the rules of good society by respecting their fellow-travelers and by paying a due regard to the fair sex." And then the compiler of this code of ocean ethics concludes by saying to the persons of education above referred to, "Thou shalt not go to bed with thy boots on!"

Our fellow-passengers are not less interesting. Among them is a prelate of the Greek Church — the Archimandrite of Vienna. A striking contrast of smiling youth and wrinkled age is offered by one charming little Maid of Athens — or some other place — and her grim-faced old nurse; the

A CONTRAST

two being a contrast analogous to that presented by the bleak Albanian shores upon our left and the smiling hillsides of the Ionian Isles, which, like a necklace of emeralds, seem floating past us on the right. Of our brief stop at lovely Corfu I shall not speak, the charm of the Ionian Islands, visited in leisure two months later, I reserve for another time. Athens is now our destination. We land at Patras, fourteen days after leaving New York. A little railway links Patras to Corinth and Athens with a chain of steel. A more enchanting railway ride than that along the Southern shores of the Corinthian Gulf I have never enjoyed. On one side the mountains of the Peloponnesus, on the other side vineyards stretching down to a gulf

A STATION

whose waters are so blue that artists hesitate to tell the truth in color, fearing the ridicule of critics who have never sailed the Grecian seas. And then beyond the waters, far in the north, rises that splendid mountain wall whose fame is immortal, for its watch-towers are named Parnassus and Helicon. Other names which have thundered down the centuries may be spelled out upon prosaic sign-boards at the railway stations. Sicyon is passed, and in a very short

PATRAS

time we hear the blatant shouting of the railway guards: "Corinthos, twenty-five minutes for luncheon! — Corinthos." Think of it! — railway sandwiches so near the site of ancient Corinth!

Our train, however, now rolls on toward Athens, skirting the shores of the Saronic Gulf and revealing to us glimpses of the famous islands Ægina and Salamis. "Does one travel in Greece on flat cars?" is the question that may be suggested by our next experiences. Although all the

members of our party had first-class tickets, giving us the right to sit in crowded, stuffy, first-class cars, two of us resolved that we would not submit to close confinement, and during a stop at a way-station we climbed into an empty flat car, and then went trailing along through the glorious spring morning across the territory of classic Megaris. Our friends

FIVE MINUTES FOR REFRESHMENTS

look envyingly on us from the tiny windows. Greek passengers smilingly point out to their companions the two eccentric foreigners on the tail-end of the train. Meantime we are enjoying the exhilaration of this flight, and losing nothing of the scenery which soon becomes imposing. But as the train begins its dizzy careening around the Skironian cliffs, a sud-

THE ROYAL PALACE

CAFES IN THE PLACE DE LA CONSTITUTION

den thunder-shower comes rolling over the jagged summits of those rocky heights, the clouds open, tons of water splash down and wash the landscape, and we have the full benefit of this unexpected shower-bath. For fifteen minutes, totally unprotected, we are relentlessly hurled on against a blinding rain. But so brief are these Greek showers and so bright and warm the sunshine which chases them away, that before we reach our destination we are rough-dried, and content in the souvenir of a diverting adventure.

An hour later we arrive in Athens. And as we drive through its modern streets, we are at the same time surprised and disappointed ; surprised to find the handsome shops,

IN MODERN ATHENS

clean pavements, fresh façades ; disappointed to observe that no reminders of the past are visible and that the inhabitants are dressed like those of any European city. But the signs above the shops, at least, are Greek ; and my companions fresh from college read with the accent of the class-room the names of tailors, milliners, and jewelers, while here and there

FROM THE HOTEL D'ANGLETERRE

we see displayed in those almost sacred Greek letters the praises of somebody's pills, of American sewing-machines, or the announcement of a bargain sale.

At a street corner is a sign in Greek and French, which tells us that this is the street of Hermes. At the upper end we see the royal palace, overlooking a large public square ; our hotel faces the palace, and also overlooks this center of Athenian life, the Place de la Constitution. Below our

windows are the tables of an open-air café; at the corner is a kiosk like those in which we buy our daily papers on the Paris Boulevards. Coquettish little tram-cars are drawn like playthings across this square by tiny horses, big enough for toys. Beyond we see the balconied façades of the Hotel de

HOTEL DE LA GRANDE BRETAGNE

la Grande Bretagne, while in the distance rises the hill of Lycabettus, crowned by the little chapel of a hermit.

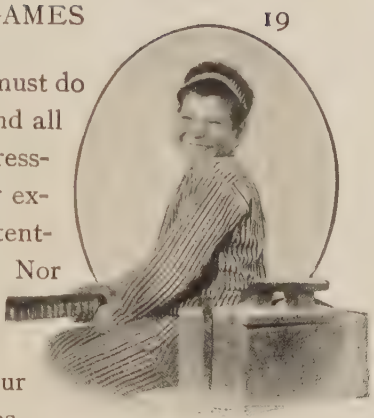
Great indeed is the distance between yonder hermit's abode and the café below us ; they are in spirit at least four hundred years apart. Bicycles flit through the streets, cabs and landaus are stationed at the hotel doors. The public vehicles are called even to-day "amaxa," the very word, you

BOOTBLACKS

will remember, Homer used in speaking of Achilles' chariot. The Greek, before he hires one of these, makes with the charioteer what is called a "symphony." Do not mistake my meaning. The making of a symphony requires no musical talent; it demands much firmness of character and a genius for diplomacy. Unless you make a symphony before you start, there will be a discord when you come to pay your fare. Imagine a New York hackman as a party to a "symphony;" there no doubt would be a "*scherzo*," and a "*con furore*," and all the movements played "*fortissimo*."

PAPADOPOULOS DRAGOMAN

The industry of caring for the footgear of the Athenian populace is remarkably developed. At every corner, in every square, we find a line of bootblacks, who, judging



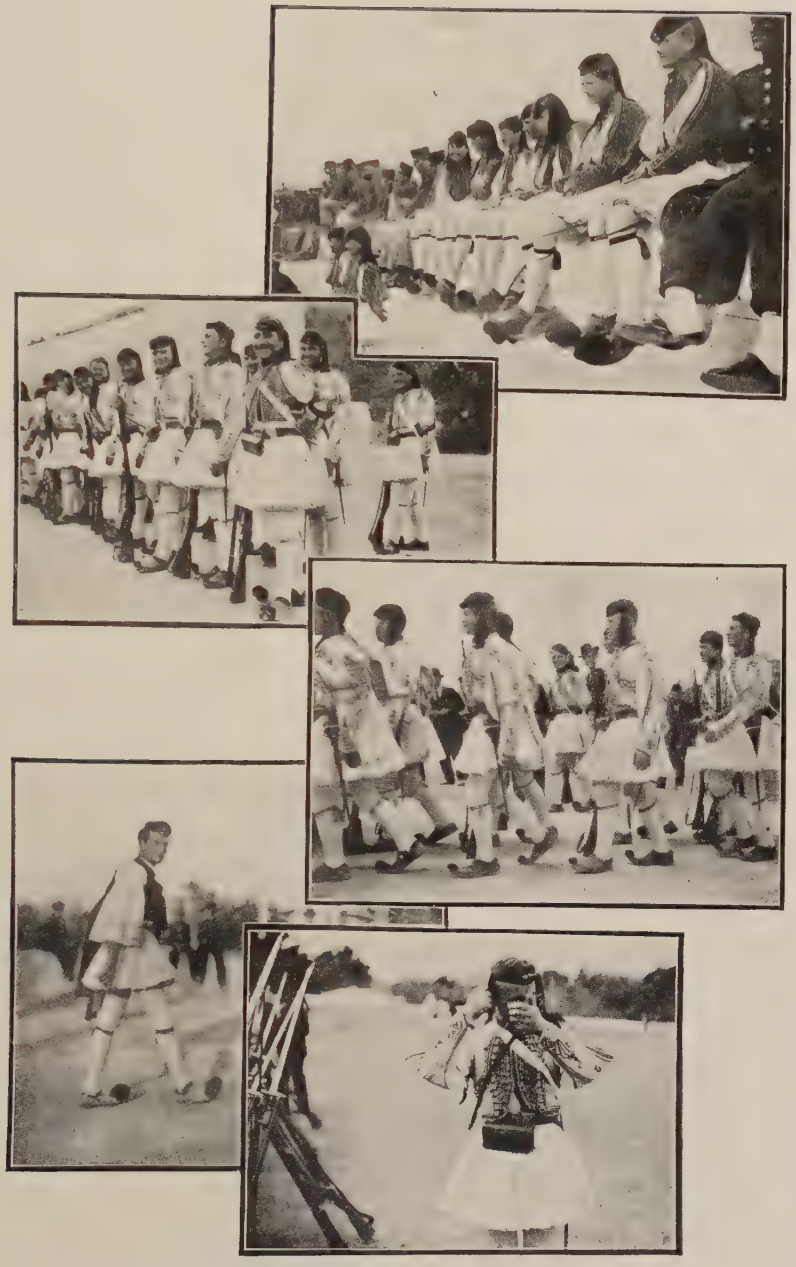
ALLURING SMILES

from the magnificence of their outfits, must do a thriving business. They keep on hand all kinds of blacking, polish, oils, and dressings, and are prepared to treat every existing kind of leather from delicate patent-leather to a piece of Attic beefsteak. Nor do we wonder at the importance of their craft. For when my friend sits down to consult his Bædeker, after our first walk through the streets of Athens, a young bootblack smiles in triumph at the condition of our recently well-polished shoes. Athenian dust is the dustiest dust in all the world. Though it may be sprinkled into momentary immobility by the municipal employees, the dust of Athens never gives up the fight. It dries and rises in the wake of the sprinkling brigade, mocking the daily efforts to subdue it. Its vitality convinces us that it must be the dust of those old Greeks who never were subdued. Ere we ruin the luster imparted to our shoes, we take our places at one of the numerous cafés, and tell the waiter to bring us whatever may be the favorite drink of the Athenians. "Mastica is what you want;" and presently he returns with two big glasses, a carafe of water, and two tiny glasses filled with a clear thin liquor. Following the example of the citizens whose order was like our own, we empty the mastica into

GRECIAN PRETZELS

the big glass and then pour water slowly in upon it. This produces a cloudy opalescent mixture, which to our unaccustomed palates suggests weak paregoric. But a week later I have learned to like mastica and drink of it as freely as the Greeks ; for it is not in any way injurious, and is one of the best preventives of fever known in Greece. Of course coffee is also in great demand at these cafés ; prepared in Oriental fashion, it is thick, delicious, and far less harmful than coffee as we prepare it. The grounds lie half an inch deep in the cup after we have finished. We have sipped only the exquisite savor, the nerve-destroying element has been left undisturbed. Another luxury to be enjoyed at a Greek "cafenion" is the pistachio-nut. "Pistikia" are not served by the establishment but peddled by itinerant dealers. The nuts have been roasted, the shells are slightly parted. Opening pistachio-nuts is as fascinating an occupation as cutting the leaves of a new book, and we sit for hours prying apart the tiny shells and devouring the contents ; every now

EVZONOI



GRECIAN SOLDIERS

GREEK SOLDIERS

and then hailing a passing vender to obtain a fresh supply. I think I ate about six thousand nuts while in Greece, and in the purchase of them learned how to bargain with a Greek. Fourteen for ten lepta — about one cent — is the usual rate; to obtain twenty for the same price requires courage and persistence. Frequently the exasperated Greek offers to gamble with you. He picks up a handful, lays them on the table, and tells you to guess, "odd or even." If you win, he smiles, congratulates you, and going to another table sells pistachio-nuts for five cents apiece to a stranger newly arrived, and thus recoups his losses.

While sipping coffee and cracking pistachio-nuts, we observe the passers-by with interest. The men as a rule are dressed like the average civilized man in any land; that is, badly dressed, in the most convenient and hideous garb ever devised. The women ape Paris fashions. the officers are well-groomed, tightly laced, typical continental *militaires*. But the soldiers, at least the Evzonoi, are a delight to the eye, with their bright red fezes, long blue tassels, short embroidered jackets, *fustanellas* of innumerable pleats, and *tsarukia* of red leather with tufts of red upon the tips of the turned-up toes. One of these gorgeous warriors presumed to be amused at sight of the broad-brimmed hat with a puggaree which sheltered me from the ardent Athenian sun. I returned

A MAN AND A PIG

his smile finding the swing of his starched skirt equally mirth-provoking. My artist friend thereupon makes a little sketch to illustrate the incident, putting into my mouth the words, "Well, I don't see that people who dress themselves in lamp-shades have any call to laugh at my hat!"

Greek currency also will afford the stranger a little amusement and considerable annoyance. The modern Greek drachma is nominally a franc, twenty cents; but in the unfortunate financial condition of the country the drachma has depreciated. All the gold and silver coin of Greece has passed out of the kingdom, and is in use upon the Continent. The paper currency alone remains, a paper drachma being worth only about twelve cents. Most of this paper is as depreciated in quality as in value, and unless carefully handled the ragged bills will fall to pieces in your fingers. In honor of the Games, a new issue of bank notes was made. The new notes come in the form of a long ribbon of fresh, crisp coupons. The American athletes used to rush into Cook's office every morning and ask, "How much to-day for a yard of drachmas?" And the clerks, consulting the latest exchange-bulletins, would measure off the Greek "greenbacks" according to the value of the French or English gold laid on the counter by the delighted purchaser, who by this operation doubled instantaneously the value of his pocket-money. But at hotels, patronized by foreigners the

A JOKE BY JACOMB-HOOD

bills are always made out on a gold basis. To pay a bill of a hundred francs requires almost two hundred paper drachma. Only in dealing with unsophisticated Greeks, if such there are, could we gain anything through the cheapness of Greek money. The traveler is always made to pay in francs (gold value) even for such articles or service as will be given to the native for the same number of paper drachmas. It is affirmed that if the Greek cannot get more from the stranger than would satisfy him if paid by a fellow-countryman he will refuse to sell.

Another curious point about Greek money is that there are no bank notes of the denomination of five drachma.

BUYING DRACHMAS BY THE YARD

Accordingly, when one day my friend tendered a ten drachma bill in exchange for a bust of the Olympian Hermes, for which five drachmas had been asked, the youthful art-dealer calmly folded the proffered bill, tore it neatly into two equal parts, pocketed the one and handed back the other. He met our protestations with the explanation that half of ten was five, and that we had therefore received the proper change; nor had we any difficulty in disposing of the mutilated half-bill. In fact, I never again saw ten drachma bills intact, for before they have been long in circulation they are cut up into fives. Many travelers object because at the big hotels the charges are not made in the money of the country. To which objection the proprietors reply that there are other hotels and restaurants where any kind of money will be welcome, and where Greek accommodations will be given for Greek money. The competition between the native establishments, called Xenodochion, and the pretentious hotels managed on French and Swiss lines is not very keen. I think one reason why so few travelers visit the interior of Greece is that the guide-books tell them that

AN ART DEALER

the Xenodochion of Athens is the type of those which the pilgrims in the provinces will be compelled to put up with ; and we can pardon those whose enthusiasm to visit classic sites does not conquer their aversion to a bill-of-fare like the one offered by the native cuisine. Don't ask me to describe it ; the mixture which the Greek chef ladles out to hungry guests is the most impersonal thing I ever saw.

The modern Greeks, especially in cities, are abandoning their picturesque but ridiculously complicated costume in favor of that cheap, ready-made attire which is supposed to be the badge of civilization. This shoddy modern dress, invariably ill-fitting, robs them of all dignity, and successfully conceals whatever of grace and beauty they have inherited from the Greeks of other days. But if in the streets of

A PUBLIC KITCHEN

Athens we see comparatively few contrasting costumes, the most striking architectural contrasts are not wanting. We find side by side with the commonplace shops and churches of to-day, remnants of medieval Athens in the form of Byzantine churches. One of these stands near the new cathedral. It is called the Small Metropolis, or the church of the Panagia Gorgopiko. Many fine archaic reliefs and ancient

GREEK NATIONAL DRESS

inscriptions have been built into the walls of the tiny church; it is in fact composed of the débris of antiquity. The resulting structure is most quaint and interesting, a sort of curio which ought to be kept safely in a big glass case. It is regrettable that seventy of these little gems of Byzantine architecture have already been torn down to make way for ugly modern structures.

CHURCH OF THE PANAGIA GORGOPIKO

Just outside the doorway of this chapel there lies a large block of gray marble. On it is carved in Greek letters an inscription which, if authentic, and many scholars admit its authority, gives to that stone a priceless value: "This is the stone from Cana of Galilee, where Jesus Christ our Lord turned water into wine." The stone was brought to Athens long ago by pilgrims from the Holy Land.

A BYZANTINE CHURCH

This mingling of the souvenirs of far separated epochs is in many places strikingly apparent. Stately columns reared by Hadrian when Rome was mistress of the world stand like a group of minarets beside an old dilapidated mosque built by the Turk when he was striving after universal sway. Then, looking through the portico of the Moslem builder, we see a modern house erected in the reign of George the First, king of the Greeks of to-day. And, did we care further to prosecute our search, we could find structures built by the

Franks and the Venetians who in turn were masters of the land, and on the slope of the Acropolis, almost within the shadow of the Parthenon, we may find a little group of dwellings so like the whitewashed houses in the native quarter of Algiers that we expect to see at every corner the flowing burnoose of an Arab Kaid. This is, however, the abode of poverty, the headquarters of the laundresses of Athens. The

BYZANTINE AND ROMAN RUINS

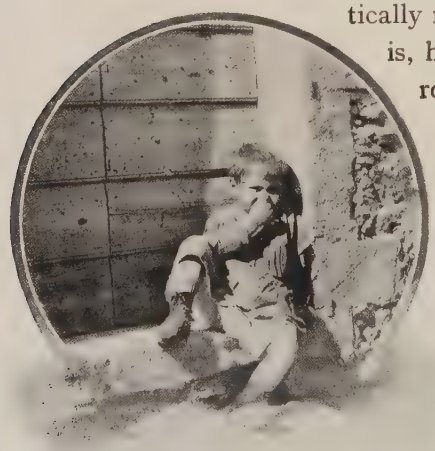
newly washed linen of the Athenians is hung out to dry upon the sacred slope of classic Athens. Although old Athens lodged her gods in temples of immortal grandeur, and her rich men in splendid palaces, her humble citizens and her many slaves were miserably provided for. The public life was everything, the home was but a place to sleep. Even to-day the poor Athenians make of the public thoroughfare a workshop, sleeping-room, or restaurant, according to the hour. At lunch-time many a young Pericles and Alcibiades may be seen feasting on bread and jam upon the public curb; and while discoursing upon sweet things I must not fail to speak a word in praise of the celebrated honey of Hymettos which is served us every morning, and it is indeed delicious. The classic bees of Mt. Hymettos, have, it is said, now emigrated to another height, but, perhaps because the honey is so sticky, the old name adheres to it. Another very curious feature of our Athenian breakfasts is the fresh butter, which at first we do not dare to taste, but

THE TEMPLE OF THESEUS

which upon acquaintance we soon learn to relish. It is almost pure white, its consistency is that of whipped cream, and sometimes we are obliged, bidding defiance to table etiquette, to dip up and spread the butter with a spoon.

HAPPY

Midnight and midday are in Athens alike in one respect: the streets and squares are deserted at the stroke of twelve, be it by day or night, for at noon as well as at midnight Athens sleeps. It is said that save foreigners and dogs no one ever ventures out when the sun is high. Athenian humanity, having lunched, apparently ceases to exist until the shadows have grown long again, until the magic light of the early evening has banished all that glaring ugliness which at high noon descends upon the city. For it must be said that modern Athens illuminated by the crude vertical rays of the noonday sun is positively ugly and repellent. There is practically no shade in Athens proper. There is, however, behind the palace a lovely royal garden where shrubs and flowers and grass and all kinds of fresh green things are shielded from Apollo's burning arrows by masses of rich foliage. Nor is this garden, doubly delicious because it is unique in Athens, reserved for selfish enjoyment by the royal family. Three afternoons in every week the garden gates are thrown open that all Athens



JEALOUS

may for the nonce forget its arid Attic surroundings in the purple gloom of the wistaria arbors. This garden is the most expensive luxury in Greece, for it has been created, as it were, from the Attic desert. Water and vegetable soil are scarcities

AN ATHENIAN HOME

in Athens, and vast sums were spent here by the Bavarian King, Otho, to please his queen Amalie, who longed for shade and verdure which before her time did not exist in Athens.

And as we linger here there naturally rises before us the face of him who rules the destinies of Greece to-day, George

KING GEORGE

the First, King of the Hellenes. He is a Danish Prince, son of the King of Denmark, and brother to Queen Alexandra of England. In 1863, he was called to fill the throne left vacant by King Otho, the unpopular German Prince who had been selected by an International Congress to rule the Greeks, but who, after a reign of about thirty years, was invited to extend indefinitely the vacation which he had unwisely taken. King George, although a man of peace, has endowed Greece with more territory than many a famous conqueror. Some thirty-three years ago he came from his home in the far north bringing to the nation that had itself chosen him as king, a royal gift — the deeds by which Great Britain transferred to the new kingdom the seven beautiful Ionian Islands which

QUEEN OLGA

the English had long before taken from the Turk. Greece being delivered from Moslem conquerors, Great Britain gracefully returned the islands which by her occupation she had preserved from ruin. Queen Olga, consort of King George, was a Russian princess. Under the sway of this royal pair who came to Greece, the southernmost of European countries, from two lands which lie in the farthest north, the nation has, in spite of her misfortunes, steadily progressed.

King George at his coronation said, "I wish to make of Greece the model kingdom of the Orient." This he has in a

IN THE ROYAL GARDEN

TRICOUPIS

certain measure accomplished. The brigands, at one time the scourge of Greece, are now plying their trade on the other side of the Turkish border, and life and property are to-day no safer in Denmark than they are in Greece. Much credit for the progress made by Greece is due to the Prime Minister, Tricoupis, of whom a French writer has said: "He has multiplied the railways and highroads, created and improved the ports of commerce, built light-houses on the dangerous coasts, dressed up the soldiers in new uniforms with brightly polished buttons. He has decreed that the Greek navy shall no longer maneuver on land, and that the Greek cavalry shall not march on foot."

PRINCE CONSTANTINE

And these good works were much approved of by the people. Shepherds from Arcadia and tillers of

IN THE ROYAL GARDEN

the soil from Thessaly looked admiringly on their torpedo-boats and men-of-war, on the brisk regiments of the spick-and-span new army and cried, "Zito, Tricoupis!" But when they were asked to pay for these little luxuries they viewed them in another light. The tide of public favor turned against the man whose life-endeavor was to place Greece in the front rank of nations. The suffrages of a people who expected

PALACE OF THE CROWN PRINCE

him to produce revenues without imposing taxes, drove him into retirement and broke his heart. He died in France, of disappointment, they say, a few days after the Olympian Games had been brought to a triumphant termination.

But we have come to Athens, not to discuss political economy, but to attend the Olympian Festival of 1896.

In April, 1896, Athens invited the world to join in a revival of the Olympian Games which had been the glory

and the pride of Ancient Greece. To understand the full significance of this modern festival we should know something of the Olympian Games of antiquity. The old Olympian Festival was never held in Athens. The Attic city had her athletic festivals, the Panathenaic Games, but the great national games were held at Olympia, a sacred place near the western coast of Greece. The site of Olympia had been buried beneath the sands of time until archæologists from Germany uncovered the wreck of its temples, stadia, theaters, and treasure-houses, eloquent reminders of a heroic past. To-day we may travel thither in modern railway cars and look upon the ruins of its temples and the shattered remnants of its multitude of statues.

OLYMPIA

THE HERMES OF OLYMPIA

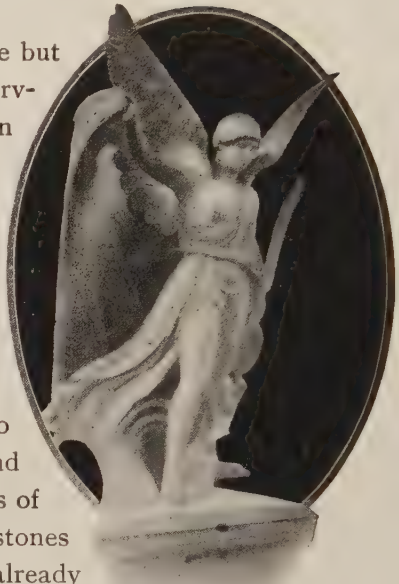
A modern hotel caters to the comfort of the traveler, a little museum offers him a feast of beauty. Supreme among the treasures of the museum of Olympia is the most perfect male figure that has come to us from the artistic past, the Hermes of Praxiteles. Authorities agree that Olympia was not a city of importance, being rather an assemblage of shrines and temples, a place to which all Greece repaired once in four

HOTEL AND MUSEUM AT OLYMPIA

years to worship the Greek gods and to attend the games here celebrated in honor of Zeus, the deity better known to us as Jupiter Olympus. Olympia was not the dwelling-place of Zeus; the father of the gods held his court on the crest of Mt. Olympus far away in Thessaly. But it was at Olympia that Zeus was honored by the celebration of the games, of which the festival of 1896 is a revival. The first recorded games, those of 776 B. C., when first the measurement of

time by Olympiads was begun, were but a revival of still more ancient observances, the origin of which has been ascribed to Hercules.

As we look upon the sculptured gods and men who on the pediment of Olympia's great temple were actually seen, admired, and praised by almost every great Greek who ever lived, our thoughts go back to those old games, and we long to see the athletes, the spectators, and the pilgrims on whom these images of stone looked down. Yet these stones were new when the games were already a long established institution, for Homer describes many of the contests which are known to have figured in the Olympian Games. Some of these are pictured in the Egyptian wall-paintings which



RESTORATION OF A VICTORY, OLYMPIA

FROM THE OLYMPIAN TEMPLES

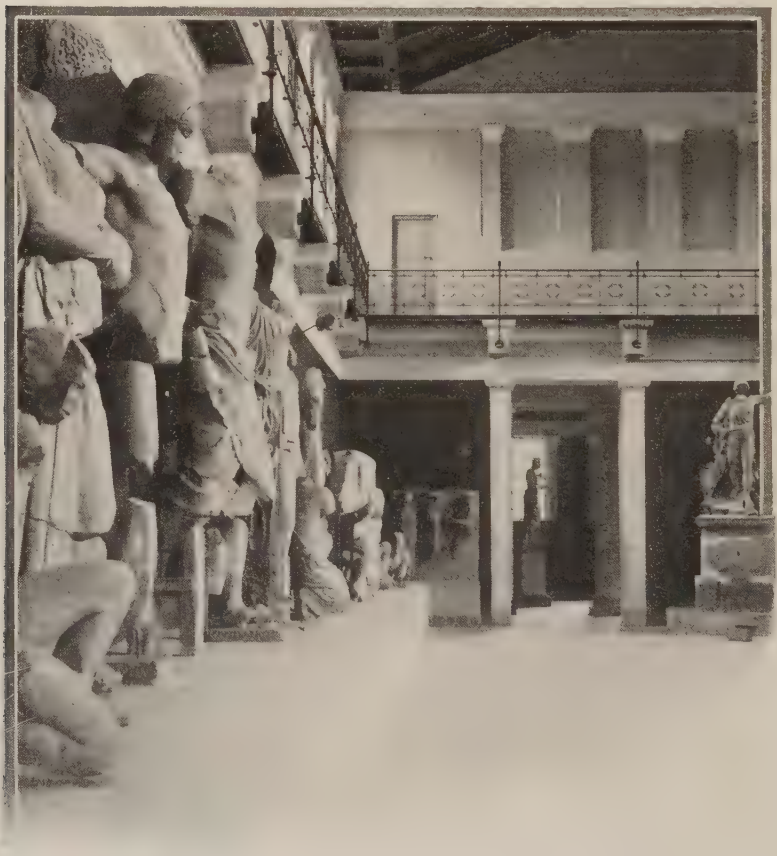
are two thousand years older than the earliest recorded games. The ancient games were exclusively Hellenic in character, to be of pure Greek blood was essential in contestants.

The season for the festival, like the Christian Easter, is dependent upon the moon. The games were held between the new and full moon nearest to the summer solstice, that is, late in June or early in July. The sacred month, or

FROM THE PEDIMENT OF AN OLYMPIAN TEMPLE

Hieromenia, began with the new moon. A truce was then proclaimed throughout the Hellenic world; warring states withdrew their armies from the field and sent their athletes to meet, in friendly trials of strength, the youth of other states with which they had just been at war, the warriors with whom they would again contend upon the field of blood after the sacred month had closed. No armed men could enter the territory of Elis. Pilgrims to Olympia were protected by the most stringent measures. Those who assaulted them

were fined, and, worst of punishments, excluded from the temples, and denied the right of witnessing the games. When the old astronomers had determined the precise date of the festival, the proclamation of the games was made, and heralds of peace were sent to the remotest corners of the Grecian world to announce that the lists were open, to invite all freeborn Greeks to enter for the contests, and, most important of all, to bid those who were at war to desist from the struggle until the great Pan-Hellenic festival in honor of the Father of Gods and Men had been duly celebrated.



THE MUSEUM OF OLYMPIA

THE ACADEMY

THE LIBRARY

One herald traveled northward to the shores of the Black Sea, another sailed away to Asia Minor and the intervening islands and thence to Syria and Egypt; a third was sent into the West to the people of the Greater Greece, of Sicily and Gaul and Spain. From all these lands to which went the heralds came athletes, pilgrims, and spectators, to throng

ENTRANCE FOR THE PUBLIC

Olympia's courts and theaters, which for four long years had been deserted save by that marvelous population of marble statues of which the ancient writers speak in words of glowing admiration. Even the mutilated marbles which have come down to us attest the justice of that admiration. The treasures of Greece are not of gold or silver; these she lacks; her

treasure is of marble. The Olympian Hermes, that masterpiece of the great epoch of Greek sculpture, is the most precious statue in the world to-day. Every year hundreds of travelers come to Olympia merely to look upon that perfect form. Put all the other discoveries at Olympia in one scale, the Hermes in the other, and it will outweigh them all in the estimation of the cultivated world. And not only were gods honored with statues at Olympia, the victors in the games were likewise carved in statues ; but of that vast sculptured army of Olympian victors few traces now remain. Their deeds, however, are recorded in undying verse, for Pindar

ENTRANCE FOR THE ATHLETES

THE STADIUM

GOING TO THE GAMES

wrote and sang of them. The name of the chief victor was given to the Olympiad or period of four years which ensued.

The feats performed by the Olympianikés of old have been recorded by the story-tellers of antiquity.

One, Milo, was so strong, especially in wrist and hands, that no one could bend or even move his little finger when he held it rigid. Another, Melamcomas, stood during two entire days with arms outstretched. Another, Polydamas, if we are to believe the evidence of tradition, could with one hand arrest the mad career of a four-horse chariot.

THE STADIUM

The old boxing-gloves would make a modern prize-fighter pale with terror. They were of leather, studded copiously with knobs and plates of metal. We are told that the short-distance runners "ran so fast as to be invisible," and this upon a sandy track.

Great honors were the reward of him who conquered in the lists: His native city became famous through his victory; on his return the enthusiastic inhabitants tore down a portion of the city wall that he might not be forced to enter at the gate used by common mortals. Ay, those were glorious days for Greece, those twelve long centuries during which two hundred and ninety-three Olympiads succeeded one another! But these Pagan festivals were destined to be engulfed by the rising tide of Christianity, for in the fourth century after Christ, the Roman Emperor Theodosius, thinking to crush Paganism by abolishing Pagan rites, decreed that

ATHENIAN MULTITUDES

THEIR MAJESTIES OF ENGLAND AND GREECE

no more games should be celebrated in honor of the old Greek god. And his mandate held good for fifteen centuries. During the long dark ages of slavery to Vandal, Venetian, Frank, or Turk, the Greeks forgot their ancient gods and their ancient games. The temples and stadia were destroyed, the marble deities and athletes slept amid the ruins until a recent yesterday, when they were brought to light through the enterprise of foreign archæologists. But to the Greeks themselves is due the credit of the revival of the Olympian Games.

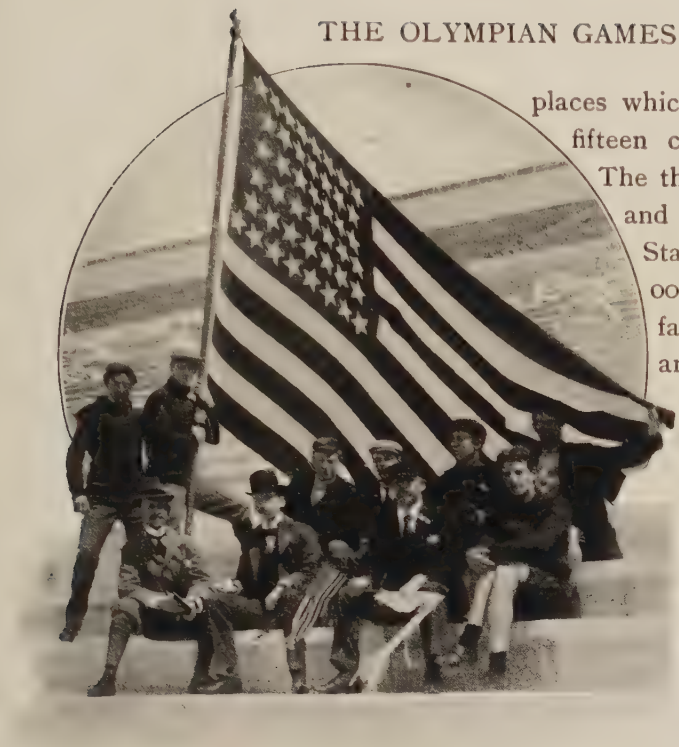
Well may the Athenians exclaim, "Ay, it is living Greece once more!" as they throng into the restored Stadium, where in the presence of a Christian multitude a Christian monarch annuls the Imperial decree of fifteen centuries ago and inaugurates the first Olympiad of modern times. The nations of the world have been invited to take part, and gladly has the invitation been accepted. The Greeks have performed miracles of generosity and self-denial to insure a successful issue of this ambitious fête. The grand old

A FINISH

Stadium, non-existent for long centuries, was restored at the expense of one man, a modern Crœsus — a Greek of Alexandria, whose name, Giorgios Averoff, has been connected with a thousand other works of public use and public charity. The Athenian Stadium was first laid out three hundred and thirty years before the birth of Christ. The spectators of old sat on the grassy slopes of the two long hill-like embankments which faced each other on both sides of the race-course, and were joined at one end by an imposing hemicycle. About five hundred years later, in the days of the Romans, a wealthy citizen, Herodes Atticus, said to the people, "At your next gathering here I promise you a stadium all of marble." And he kept his word.

In 1896 a modern millionaire made a similar promise and fulfilled it. The Stadium was restored according to the ancient plans. To be seen here and there are darker stones from the original structure among the newer blocks, having been found and set up in

"GET SET!"



THE BOSTON TEAM

places which they occupied fifteen centuries before. The thirty-three aisles and stairways of the Stadium, the 60,000 seats would be familiar to many an Athenian of the second century; but the 60,000 people who today occupy the seats would puzzle him, indeed; for among them he would see many "barbarians" from lands undreamed of in his day. The old Athenian spectators whitened or enriched with bright colors the marble sides of the Stadium; we moderns blacken it with our hideous funereal garb. But, in spite of all, the sight is one which thrills us, one the like of which has never before been witnessed in our modern age. The first glimpse of the crowded Stadium is to be numbered among the great sensations of a life time. The impressiveness which attaches to every aggregation of humanity is heightened by a close massing of the people and by the classic outlines of the Stadium.

THE PRINCETON TEAM

ATHLETES IN ACTION

Past the entrance to this now modern course runs the road from Marathon; the Bay of Salamis may be seen from the higher tiers, the Acropolis is visible from nearly every seat. It was this immortal background that gave the modern Olympian Games a deeper, wider significance than has ever dignified any other athletic meeting whatsoever.

For it must be confessed that the chief interest of the Olympian Games of 1896 lay in the splendid setting given them, rather than in the games themselves. From the standpoint of modern athletics the contests witnessed by the imposing audience were not remark-

able save in one respect, the invincibility of our American champions. No records were broken, in fact our men were not called upon even to equal their own best previous work in their respective lines.

The spectators being assembled to the number of 60,000, all waits on the arrival of the Royal party. At the appointed hour, with democratic punctuality, King George, escorted by the committees, makes his entry. With him are the Queen, the Crown-Prince Constantine, and Prince George, the second son. To the music of the Greek National Hymn the little procession traverses the Stadium, while the multitudes stand with heads respectfully uncovered. And mingled with the respect there is a sense of gratitude; for had it not been for the unselfish and enthusiastic support of the King and Princes, this splendid spectacle would never have been possible. The Crown-Prince as President of the special Greek Committee was no mere figurehead; he, aided by Prince George, performed much of the work of organization, while without the moral support and sympathy of the Royal Family the successful issue of the festival would have been in doubt.

The opening ceremonies over, let us take up the program for the first day's sports.

The first event is the one-hundred-meter race. This event is considered now, as in ancient times, the most important of those occurring within the limits of the Stadium. Three heats are run. We listen for the victors' names, expecting in the natural order of things to hear the heralds call out such Greek appellations as "Belokas," or "Lagoudakis!" But no! The winning names announced have a familiar

ROBERT GARRETT

BUYING TICKETS FOR THE GAMES

sound, for they are "Curtis," "Lane," and "Burke!" Not a bad start for us, indeed.

Our little group of spectators from across the sea hugs itself in joy; there are distant echoes of college yells, rising here and there from little groups, and "B. A. A.," and "Rah, rah, rah!" and for the moment the word "*Amerikis*" is on the lips of all.

And thus it is in nearly all the subsequent events. Nine times in ten it is the Stars and Stripes that is run up to indicate the winner's nationality. Our country's flag and honor are upheld by four men from Princeton, and by a team of athletes who come to the Athens of the Old World from the Athens of the New, for they wear the colors of the Boston Athletic Association. There were, of course, contestants from other nations, and many ambitious Greeks made brave attempts to prove themselves deserving sons of an immortal race. But fortune did not favor them. Athletic sports had not been practiced here on classic soil for many generations, and the modern Greeks found themselves outclassed in games which were to them unfamiliar if not totally unknown.

The triple jump is now contested. "What, again?" we ask ourselves, ás Conolly, of Boston, with a victorious hop, skip, and jump, covers forty-five good feet of classic soil,—enough, more than enough to prove that once more we have triumphed; and a moment later up goes the banner announcing the first victory of the new Olympiad in the "finals;" and it is the familiar red, white, and blue of the Star Spangled banner that lights up the Grecian sky.

And then the discus-throwing is announced. For this, the most truly Greek of all the contests, no American had originally been entered. The discus is familiar to us only in connection with statues of old athletes in our art-museums.

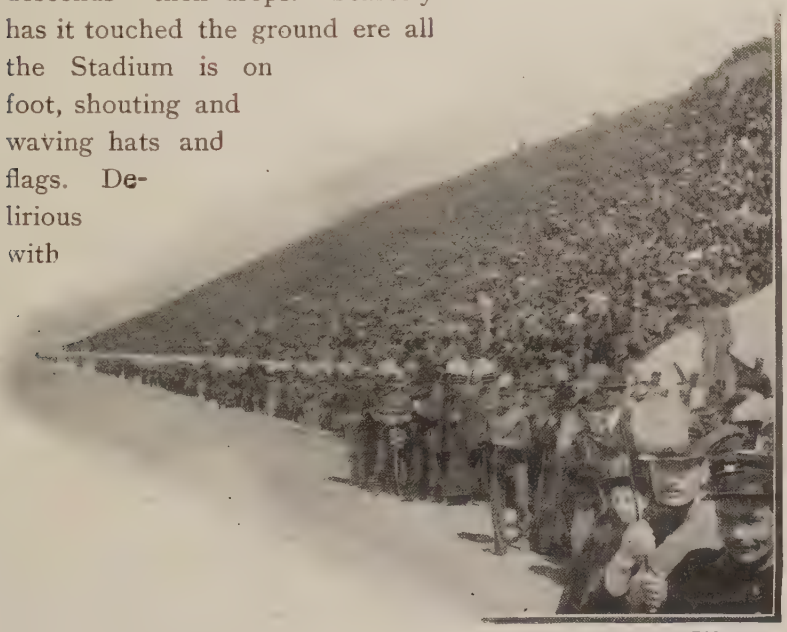
THE ASSEMBLING MULTITUDE

Our men can put the shot or throw the hammer, but not one of them has ever seen a discus, much less tried to hurl one. The Greeks, upon the other hand, have long been practicing their antique game, and one of their number has acquired a remarkable proficiency, equaling the best recorded throws of old Olympian victors. Nor was he less beautiful of form or graceful of gesture than the model who served as inspiration for the sculptor Myron, hundreds of years ago. Those who watched him in practice affirmed that in the grace of his poses and gestures and in the accuracy of his delivery he could not have been surpassed by the famous statue itself had it come to life. Remembering this we are not surprised at the hesitation of one of our boys, a member of the Princeton team, when requested at the last moment to enter the lists and, all unprepared, meet the Greek champion in an unfamiliar game. But although he hesitated, he did not decline the challenge. With the same undaunted spirit which has ever characterized the Anglo-Saxon race, Robert Garrett, of the Princeton team, took up a

A MOUNTAIN OF HUMANITY

discus for the first time in his life, and stood before the thronging thousands ready to do at least his best for the honor of the Orange and Black and the Stars and Stripes. Our chance of victory seems ridiculously small; we can but hope that our defeat will not call down the laughter of the Greeks.

The first efforts are merely tentative on the part of our champion. Then with that infinite capacity for "catching on," which seems to be the birthright of every Yankee, Garrett improves, and in his final throw wins more than he or his friends dared to hope for: the right to retire gracefully and without ridicule. Then Gouskos, the Greek, certain of victory, comes forward. With classic gestures he picks up his discus, and with the grace of an animated antique statue launches it into space. His final throw is marvelously artistic, the heavy discus soars away, descends—then drops. Scarcely has it touched the ground ere all the Stadium is on foot, shouting and waving hats and flags. Delirious with



THIRTY THOUSAND PEOPLE

delight, Greek gentlemen embrace each other. For the first time the victory seems theirs, and we may readily imagine their great joy — and then their bitter disappointment, almost despair, when instead of the Greek flag the Stars and Stripes is again hoisted to the victors' mast! In their enthusiastic admiration for the grace and beauty of their champion's delivery the Greeks had failed to note the very important fact that Garrett's discus, although launched by an unpracticed hand, had touched the earth just seven and one-half inches beyond that which the Greek had so artistically thrown!

All were stupefied. The Greeks had been defeated at their own classic exercise. They were overwhelmed by the superior skill and daring of the Americans, to whom they ascribed a supernatural invincibility enabling them to dispense with training and to win at games which they had never before seen.

IN MODERN MARATHON

To omit further details, the Americans in five contests the first day won the only two decided, took all the heats in two of the others; and, in spite of the fact that not one of our boys was entered for the fifth event, I verily believe the Greeks expected us to win it.

The second day our flag went up three times. Our boys are now called the

THE MOUND OF MARATHON

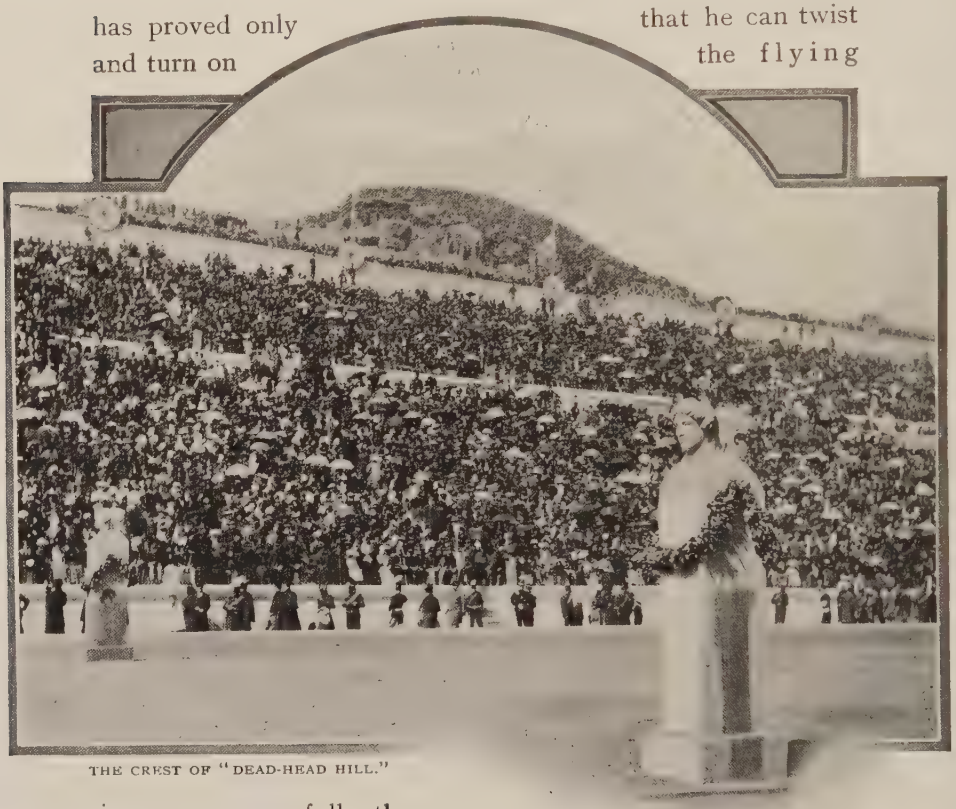
"American invincibles." Garrett at putting the shot surpasses the Greek contestant, whose physical perfection was such that his fellow-countrymen, who still have an eye for beauty, saluted him as "Hermes."

A Britisher and a Dane then prove their superiority in lifting weights; but everything else is ours save one event, the fifteen-hundred-meter race; and even this is credited to us, for although won by a splendid fellow from Australia, it is put down as an American victory. The Greeks are not strong in antipodal geography, and when we explain that Flack, the winner, is an Australian, not an American, they answer, "Oh, well, that is about the same thing; we congratulate you."

And the congratulations are sincere, for the Americans are not begrudged their victories. This is because we are like those people alluded to by Homer as "the blameless Ethiopians" who live so far away as to excite no jealousy.

The third day is devoted to shooting matches in the fine new shooting-stand on the Phaleric plain. The fourth day witnesses the gymnastic exercises in the amphitheater, and

is chiefly notable because on that day for the first time the blue and white flag is unfurled in token of a native victory. It is not a heroic one, however, for the Greek, Metrapolous, has proved only that he can twist and turn on the flying rings more gracefully than the sturdy Germans who excel in almost every one of the other contests.



THE CREST OF "DEAD-HEAD HILL."

One Athenian daily paper explained the superiority of the Americans on the ground that they joined to the inherited athletic training of the Anglo-Saxon, the wild impetuosity of the red-skinned Indians! Another, having observed the use of chewing-gum, informed an eager public that the Americans had great endurance because they chewed pitch to strengthen the lungs! Still another expressed great

admiration for the piety of the American contestants, for noting but not understanding the custom of blowing on the hands to moisten them before grasping a vaulting-pole or a hammer, the reporter wrote that before each event the Americans bowed their heads in their hands and murmured a brief prayer!

The fifth day is the day of the great race from Marathon. On this event the Greeks founded all their hopes. "If we but win the prize for Marathon, we shall forget all our defeats," was the cry which went up from the vast Hellenic majority of the audience which on Friday fills the Stadium, I had almost said to suffocation. On the surrounding walls, on the hill which dominates the Stadium, on the banks of the Ilyssos, in the gardens of the Zappion, on the boulevards, are massed the thousands who could not force their way into the amphitheater. Never has such a sight been witnessed since the days of antique Athens. The other quarters of the city are deserted, the entire population is massed around and in the Stadium. As early as two o'clock there is not a vacant place, not even on "dead-head hill" which rises high above the marble seats. Still the crowds arrive. On each side rises a huge mountain-range of faces, and all these faces are aglow with expectation and

DEAD HEAD HILL.

impatience, all save the four calm marble visages which mark the curve of the course near the royal platform. Why should this scene impress them? They, at least, have witnessed more imposing spectacles, for they stood here during the long centuries of Athenian greatness. They have beheld the splendid Panatheniac gatherings of long ago, they have seen face to face the immortal men whose deeds and songs will never be forgotten. Could they give expression to their thoughts, they would only smile derisively at this throng of moderns, and ask that those who dragged them from their hiding-places deep in the classic earth should bury them again that they might slumber on with the remains of that antiquity of which they formed a part. "We are not of your world," they would say, "let us return a second time into our graves."

I must begin the record of the fifth day with the statement that while the runners are preparing for the start from Marathon, twenty-five miles away, other athletes are contending in the presence of a hundred thousand people. In the Stadium the Americans again cover themselves with glory. Burke wins the finals in the hundred-meter race. Clarke wins the high jump. Curtis flies to victory over the hurdles. Hoyt and Tyler contest the prize for pole-vaulting with the bar one

READY TO START FROM MARATHON

PREMIER DELAYNNIS

and one-half feet above where it had been abandoned by their Greek opponents. Invincibility is still with the Americans. The Greeks begin to tremble at the thought that our Blake is even now running against their champions on the road from Marathon. When M. Delyannis, the prime minister, saw the American flag go up for the fourth time, he turned to our minister and asked despairingly, "Why did Columbus ever discover your unconquerable country?"

Meantime we must not forget the events transpiring far away on the Marathon road. There Greeks and barbarians are running with grim determination. They know that he who wins the race from Marathon will gain more than

LOUËS, MARATHON VICTOR 1896

ephemeral honor; that the story of his victory will be recited to admiring generations long after the other contestants have passed into oblivion. At Athens the high jump is in progress when mounted couriers arrive announcing that at the sixth mile the Frenchman leads, that the Australian is close behind, that our own gallant Blake is next and doing well. The spectators are all a-tremble with excitement. They remain on tiptoe as if eager for the first glimpse of the runners who are still eighteen miles away. The Princes make their way to the entrance to await the victor who must soon arrive. The excitement is intense. The suspense is almost painful. All eyes are gazing westward, when at last a cannon-shot is heard. It means that the first runner has reached the outer boulevards, that in a moment he will be here. Who or what he is no one can tell until the crowd outside thunders its joy in a great roar, "A Greek! It is a Greek! Zito, Louës!" And a young Greek peasant, Spiridione Louës, all dust and perspiration, staggers into the Stadium, where a hundred thousand people acclaim him as the hero of the hour.

Then, while from the sloping sides of the Stadium avalanches of applause come crashing down; while the King of Greece so far forgets his royal dignity as to rip the visor from his royal cap in waving it like mad; while staid and proper citizens embrace each other frantically; while tears of joy are shed; while doves, to which long white ribbons are attached, are loosed and flutter in the air; while all Athens utters a triumphant shout, Louës, the simple peasant, the farmer

SHERRING OF CANADA, FIRST

SVANBERG OF SWEDEN, SECOND

FRANK OF AMERICA, THIRD

MARATHON VICTORS IN 1906

from the little hamlet Amarousi, is escorted by two Princes and a Russian Grand Duke — all three embracing, even kissing him — from the entrance to the far end of the Stadium where he is greeted by a royal hand in the midst of such a scene as Athens has not witnessed in a thousand years. All the other runners who arrive in quick succession are, with one exception, Greeks. The native cup of happiness is full. The innate endurance of the Greek peasants prevailed in the great test, over the scientific training of the "American Invincibles." The winner's time, as announced by the judges, was two hours and fifty-eight minutes, the distance forty kilometers, a trifle over twenty-five miles.

The following Tuesday was appointed for the ceremony of the presentation of prizes; but the ceremony was post-

IN HONOR OF JUPITER PLUVIUS

poned because, the games in his honor being ended, Jupiter Olympus suddenly abdicated, and the reign of Jupiter Pluvius began. Yet in spite of the accession of this unpopular monarch, forty thousand people assembled in the Stadium. Louës, of Marathon fame, arrives, dressed in the national costume. He carries one of the forty thousand umbrellas displayed about the course, and a bouquet presented by admiring feminine spectators. Like a true hero, he is apparently unaffected by his victory, yet enough has already been done to spoil him. Immediately after the race he was overwhelmed with favors. A lady detached her watch and gave it to him ; a pretty girl placed a be-ribboned dove in his hands ; a barber enthusiastically declared that Louës's chin should enjoy a daily scrape at his establishment as long as Louës

SPECTATORS FROM THE U. S. A.

lived and did not grow a beard ; a hatter vowed to hat him ; a shoemaker swore to shoe him all his days ; a haberdasher took his oath that he should never lack for underwear and hosiery ; free meals for life, free drinks, free theater-tickets, were assured him until his dying day. A rich man gave him land in his native village, and a wealthy lady offered him the choice of a large sum of money or a kiss. And Louës, with

CHEZ MME. BAKMETIEFF

a spirit of an amateur, refused the lucre, and with the gallantry of an Olympianiké accepted the other proposition. All these things he received in addition to the regular prizes, the presentation of which is now postponed until a fairer day.

And while awaiting clearer skies let me recall a few of the social diversions that marked the stay of the foreign athletes in Athens. Numberless entertainments were given in honor of those who contended in the games. The King gave a

AMERICAN SWIMMERS

HIGH DIVING AT PHALERON

LOOKING ON

luncheon ; the mayor followed with a picnic ; ambassadors and wealthy citizens all did their share. Much amusement was caused at the King's luncheon when his majesty sent his chamberlain to the American table with a request that our boys should kindly repeat their strange "war cries." "The king," he said, "had listened at a distance to these incomprehensible shouts, and was curious to give them a critical

THE AMERICAN TEAM IN 1906

hearing at close quarters." All arose and gave a rousing, "Rah, rah, rah — Ellas. Ellas, Ellas, Zito ! Hurrah for Greece !" and his majesty expressed himself as satisfied. The papers alluded to these war cries as "Onomatopeia," considering them frenetic shouts difficult to comprehend.

Next to the royal banquet the most enjoyable social event was a picnic given by the charming American wife of the Russian Secretary of Legation, who entertained the Royal Princes and the athletes in the grove of Daphne.

Rather democratic, is it not, to see Prince Constantine, Prince George, and Prince Nicholas of Greece, grouped there with the peasant Louës, and our young Bostonians and Princeton men? Prince George, the big fellow seated in the center of the last row, was a prime favorite with all. As an athlete he could have taken many prizes had he contended. During the weight-lifting match he picked up and nonchalantly handed to a contestant a dumb-bell, which the latter

TAKING THE HURDLES

could barely lift. At the picnic he assured one of our men, good humoredly, "I could wrestle with you, and sit on you, too." Nor was the Crown-Prince a stickler for ceremony. During the games he was ever in the arena, and it was no unusual thing to see him carrying a glass of cognac to a resting athlete, or holding the sweater of another while a contest was in progress. Even the King himself was not above a little dignified familiarity and amusement upon proper occasions.

KING GEORGE BESTOWS THE OLIVE BRANCH UPON TOM BURKE

"You may win this time," he said to Burke, "but we will beat you in 1900, if I have to run myself!" And the King's words were enshrined in the hearts of every young Greek, if we are to judge from the enthusiasm with which the training for 1900 was undertaken. The open-air gymnasia were thronged every day with school-boys and young men, all striving to emulate the deeds of the Americans.

But sometimes, during the games of 1896, imitation rather than emulation was indulged in. This was apparent, especially in the pistol-shooting matches. The American marks-

TOM BURKE OF BOSTON

men, the Payne brothers, arrived on the very day of the matches, and, to steady their travel-disturbed nerves, took frequent sips of whisky from pocket-flasks. On the second day not a Greek contestant sighted a gun, without first applying a black bottle to his lips. The Messrs. Payne also found it necessary to cover their pistol barrels by smoking with burning matches ; the sunlight glistening from the polished steel would have prevented accurate aim. Next day, although the sun was overcast, the Greeks smoked their weapons lock, stock, and barrel, almost reducing them to

ARCHIE HAHN OF MILWAUKEE, WINNER OF THE HUNDRED METERS IN 1906

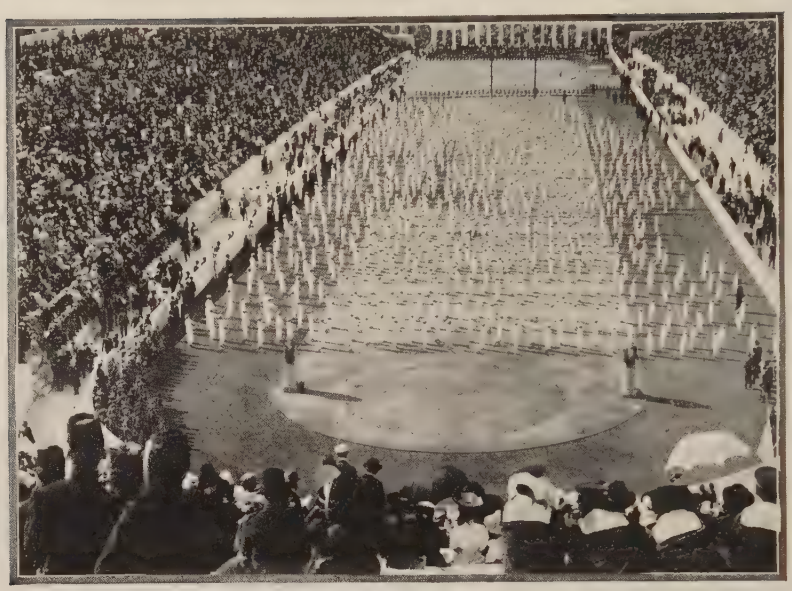
ashes in their desire to do the proper thing. Thus the flattery of imitation was carried to ludicrous extremes.

But let us now return to the Stadium to witness the closing ceremonies of the games. Below, grouped at the foot of the royal platform, are the various committees, the victorious athletes, the herald Hadji Petros, the Royal Princes, and one victor of whom we have not spoken, the winner of the prize

ARCHIE HAHN WINNING THE HUNDRED METERS, 1906

for the composition of the best ode in Ancient Greek. It is an Englishman from Oxford University who has proved that he can write a better ode in ancient Greek than any of the descendants of the poet Pindar who sang the fame of the Olympianikés in the days of old.

The herald, taking up the list of victors, cries in modern Greek: "Amerikis, Burke. Dromos ekaton-metron," and fifteen centuries look down on the slight, graceful figure of the youth who, mounting to the royal platform, receives from the hand of the King of Greece the first Olympian olive



GYMNASTIC EXERCISES BY ATHENIAN SCHOOLBOYS

branch ever bestowed since that far-off day in the year of our Lord 394, when the last of the old Olympiads was solemnly inaugurated in the land of Elis. The name of the winner of the one-hundred-meter race was always given to the quadrennial period following the games. Therefore the last four years of the nineteenth century must be known to history as the "Olympiad of Thomas Burke, of Boston"!

It must have been a thrilling moment for him as he stood there face to face with the King, the Crown-Prince, and a host of royal personages, while on every side there arose tier on tier of eager faces, a cloud of witnesses which seemed to touch the sky — that same blue sky of Greece which has looked down upon so many heroes.

But again the herald's voice is heard "Dromos tetrakosioi-metron," and the prizes for the four-hundred-meter race are thrust into the already well-filled arms of Burke, who, with his double set of trophies, bows himself from the royal

ATHENIAN MULTITUDES

ATHENIAN SCHOOLBOYS ENTERING THE STADIUM

PROCESSION OF VICTORS

presence and reaching the arena receives congratulations of a hundred friends. What are the prizes? First, the diplomas contained in large pasteboard rolls, trimmed with gold paper; next, a silver medal, on which is stamped a splendid head of Zeus, and the classic outlines of the Acropolis and of the Parthenon; last and most important, the priceless branch of olive from the sacred groves of far-away Olympia, a prize purposely valueless that it may thereby be invaluable. These are the official prizes, but they are not the only ones, nor even the first, for during the preceding days the people had

LOUËS LEADING THE PROCESSION OF VICTORS

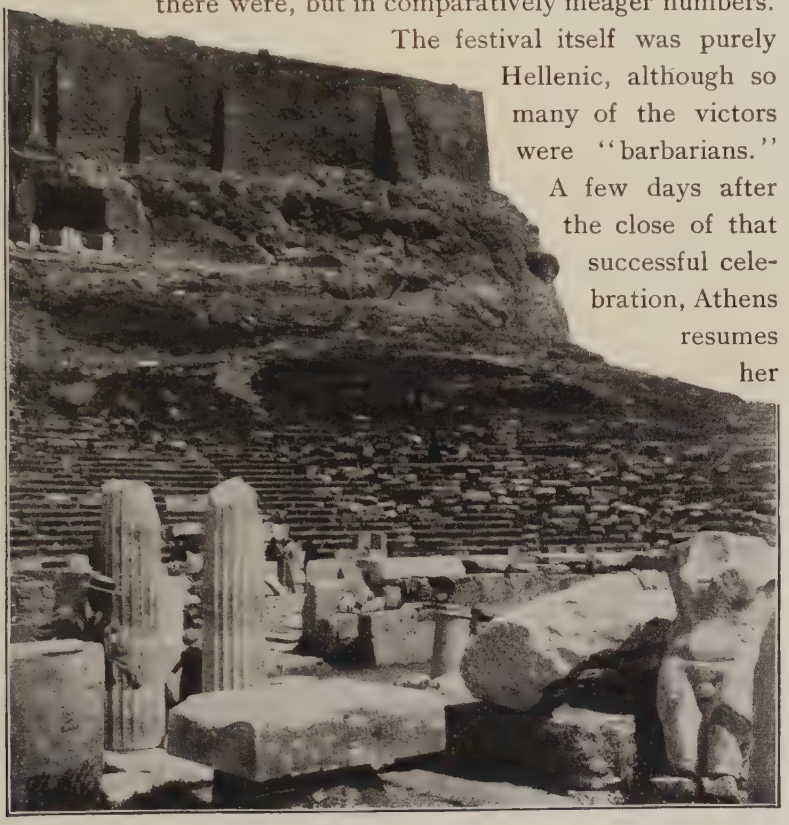
made their spontaneous offerings. One day a ragged bank-note, worth about sixty cents, was thrust into Burke's hands; another day a set of postage-stamps was given him by a small boy, and never could our athletes enter a public cab or carriage without creating a good-natured turmoil among the passers-by, who each and every one claimed the right as Greeks and hosts to pay the driver of the triumphal chariot. The other athletes having received their prizes and diplomas,

OLD ATHENS

the victors, according to an ancient custom, march several times around the vast arena. The long parade is headed by the hero of the run from Marathon, resplendent in his gorgeous Greek attire. He holds aloft the flag of modern Greece and waves it in response to thunders of applause. Happy indeed should be the lives of all these victors if the poet's words be true, for Pindar, who wrote many odes honoring those who bore off the highest prizes in olden games, informs us: —

"That he who overcometh hath because of the Games a sweet tranquillity throughout his life forevermore."

As they file past, bearing their prizes in the shadow of the cheering multitude, you may ask who are these unknown thousands massed above us? Are they Greeks, or do they come from foreign lands? It is admitted that the vast majority of these spectators were citizens of Athens; almost the entire population (for Athens boasts only about 130,000 people) was present at the games. The poorest could afford to come, for prices ranged from 12 to 25 cents, according to the proximity of the sections to the royal seats. Strangers there were, but in comparatively meager numbers. The festival itself was purely Hellenic, although so many of the victors were "barbarians." A few days after the close of that successful celebration, Athens resumes her



THEATER OF DIONYSOS

accustomed air of dignity and calm, and we who do not follow in the train of the departing crowds become more keenly conscious of the attraction of that magnet which for centuries has drawn men to Athens, that rock which is the eternal glory of Athens—the Acropolis. The old Greeks set upon that rock a crown of beauty. It is there to-day, magnificent in its mutilation.

Greece was the earliest home of the beautiful, and her structures and her statues are still the most beautiful, nearer to perfection than any that have been reared or carved since

WHERE THE AGES SIT AS SPECTATORS

the Parthenon was new. It is difficult at first to believe this, yet those whose lives have been devoted to the study of the arts tell us that it is true ; that when in the mind's eye these ruined monuments are reconstructed, when the fragments of Greek statues have been imagined into an unbroken whole, they will rise before us in absolute perfection, defying modern art and architecture. At the base of the rock is the theater of the wine god, Dionysos ; above looms the wall of the Acropolis, a wall suggestive of a fortress, for in fact the Acropolis was first a fortress then a sanctuary.

To describe properly the various features of this height, to tell of their significance, must be the task of one much better versed in history and art than I. I shall but speak of a visit to the summit of the sacred hill, and say a word of the buildings which helped to make the fame of Athens.

THE TEMPLE OF WINGED VICTORY

CICERONE

Our cicerone endeavors to make our visit doubly interesting for us by pointing out two things at once, describing one in mongrel French, the other in a sort of Volapuk, composed of the elements of many languages. In the Propylea guides lie in wait for visitors. It is well worth while to listen for an hour to one of these guides on the Acropolis, not for the accurate information to be extracted from them, but for the many new side-lights which their genius throws on history and art. What could be more original than the distinction drawn between Ionic and Doric columns by one guide, who said : "Now, see, old Athens people, all same Ionic people, very luxury people ; when they go fight always wear fine hat, fine shoes. Now, see, Ionic column like peo-

DORIC PILLARS OF THE PROPYLEA

ple who make him;" and, pointing to the graceful capital of one of the Ionic pillars of the little Temple of Victory, he goes on: "See on top the fine hat!": then pointing to the base, "See the fine shoes! Now, Spartan people all same Doric people, very plain people. When they go fight, no hat, no shoes. Now see, Doric column no got a capital, no got a base, all plain like Doric people." After listening to this succinct statement, who could ever mistake an Ionic for a Doric column?

Meantime we have observed with some surprise stains of reddish brown upon the classic columns. Why is it that so many travelers speak of the dazzling whiteness of these walls and pillars of Pentelic marble? They are not white. I quote a recognized authority when I say that they have been toned by centuries of Attic dust to that rich, gold-brown which has turned the Parthenon from marble almost to ruddy gold.

Yes, the Parthenon stands to-day as a ruin, all in white and gold; the whiteness typical of its extreme old age, while the gilded pillars suggest that Nature, conscious of the

THE PROPYLEA

priceless value of this architectural treasure, had resolved to preserve it by covering its columns with protecting lacquer of pure gold.

But ruin glares down upon us from every angle of the noble pile. Time and decay have done their little, and war and man's thoughtlessness have done the rest. Only two hundred and fifty years ago the Parthenon was practically

THE WRECK OF AGES

intact. The Turks were masters then in Greece ; a Turkish garrison occupied the Acropolis ; the Erectheum was a seraglio ; the Parthenon, after having served as a mosque, had been converted into a powder magazine. Venice, in 1687, sent her armies to dislodge the infidels. A shell from the Venetian batteries upon a neighboring hill, found its way, like a messenger of destruction into the former temple of

PILLARS OF THE PARTHENON BY NIGHT

Athena, and with a roar, which still echoes in the hearts of all who love the beautiful, the Parthenon, after delighting the souls of men for 2300 years, became a ruin. Yet what a ruin is there! — more perfect, despite its mutilations than the proudest structures of the modern world.

The Acropolis, however, owed much of its splendor to an early disaster. During the second invasion of the Persians, four hundred and eighty years before Christ, the Athenians returning to their beloved city, which had at last been delivered from the Asiatic barbarians as a result of the battle of Salamis, beheld a spectacle which stirred them to indignation and to grief. Their proud old rock still loomed above the city but, alas, how changed! Its splendid temples were

THE PARTHENON, WEST FRONT

burned, their walls and columns were cracked and defaced, the precious offerings all were gone, and, worst of all, the marble population of the sacred hill had not escaped the fury of the Asiatic host. The statues of Athena, of the gods and goddesses who had so long been worshiped here, had been tumbled from their pedestals, their members shattered by the fall, their faces marred by vandal hands. The arms, the legs, the hands, the dainty fingers, the noses and the ears of innumerable divinities were scattered here as if an avalanche had swept across the sacred height. We do not wonder that the Athenians wept at sight of all that ruin. But then with an indomitable energy the people of Attica resolved to make a New Athens which should surpass the old whose loss they mourned. And first of all, that this determination to begin from the beginning should be plainly understood, they buried all those muti- lated deities in

THE PARTHENON, EAST FRONT

PILLARS OF THE PARTHENON

this consecrated ground, just as the soldiers slain in battle had been buried under the mound at Marathon. And then, at the command of Pericles, two men, Ictinus and Callicrates, whose fame will be immortal, conceived and constructed the most perfect buildings that the world has ever known and Phidias adorned them with his immortal sculptures.

Meantime the entombed gods and goddesses slept on, new statues were reared, the Acropolis became the wonder and the admiration of the ancient world. The entombed gods were worshiped, but in other bodies, for their resting-places had been long forgotten. The centuries roll on and the cult of the Olympic Deities becomes a dead religion. It is well

that the sleeping goddesses know not that the Greeks have totally forsaken them. It is well that their sleep shall last until the world, which has long scoffed at their ruined shrines, should have learned to worship that perfect art which was but the expression of Greek religious thought.

It was not until 1886 that the fates were satisfied that the world was ready to render homage before the divinities which the old Persians had cast down. The modern king of Hellenes was strolling here, watching the excavators at their work. Suddenly one of the men shouts from a trench:

THE ACROPOLIS FROM THE THESEON

CARYATIDS OF THE ERECHTHEUM

"Majesty, we have found the gods!" And King George looked and beheld the awakening smiles of fourteen resuscitated goddesses, who, after a sleep of 2300 years, were awakened like sleeping princesses from a magic spell, and saw again the soft light of the Athenian sky.

It was a revelation of a new antiquity; of an unknown art with a strange exotic charm. Of the gorgeous tinting of these statues, traces remain, but so delicate are these traces that it appears as if the powdery pigments could be dusted off with a feather. The thought that these are the creatures of an epoch not only far removed from our own, but even separated by a wide gulf of time from that of classic Greece gives them a fascination difficult to define. They seem to have come to us, not out of the past of this world, but from another, a pre-existent sphere.

THE ERECHTHEUM

But other fair women of a later epoch grace the ruins of the Acropolis. Beneath the Portico of the Maidens stand those tireless beauties, the Caryatids, who for more than two thousand years have borne all uncomplainingly their heavy burden. They have witnessed here the sacrilege and devastation of the Turk; they saw with horror the pillars

A FALLEN COLUMN

of the Parthenon cast down; but bravely have they stood unshaken by any terrors, worthy daughters of a mighty race.

An Athenian journalist of to-day has compared the Greek people to a Caryatid, upon whose head fate has amused herself by piling up a weight of discouragements and misfortunes. If we look back into her history, we shall

THE PARTHENON

see that Greece has borne up beneath the burden of the Romans, Goths, and Ostrogoths, of the Vandals and the Slavs, of the Franks, the Catalans, and the Venetians, and — for the list is not yet finished — of the Florentines, the Genoese, and for nearly four hundred years she has all but succumbed beneath the barbarous oppression of the Turk.

But the traveler need not be deeply versed in history nor in art to feel the charm that with the evening descends upon the sacred height of the Acropolis. The time-stained pillars of the Parthenon are bathed in an atmosphere of rosy glory, the fluted columns reflect the sunset fires once again as they have done unnumbered times before. No; not unnumbered; for we know the date of their erection,

ARCHAIC GODDESSES

THE PORTICO OF THE MAIDENS

TEMPLE OF THESEUS

and by a simple reckoning we learn that they have stood here for about nine hundred thousand days — that nearly a million sunsets have gilded these immortal marbles. And see how the glory seems to hover over Salamis and that narrow strait where was fought the greatest naval battle of antiquity! There the Athenians and their allies, under the gallant leader Themistocles, routed the Persian fleets of Xerxes, and saved not only the civilization of the Greeks, but of the world.

AN ATHENIAN VISTA

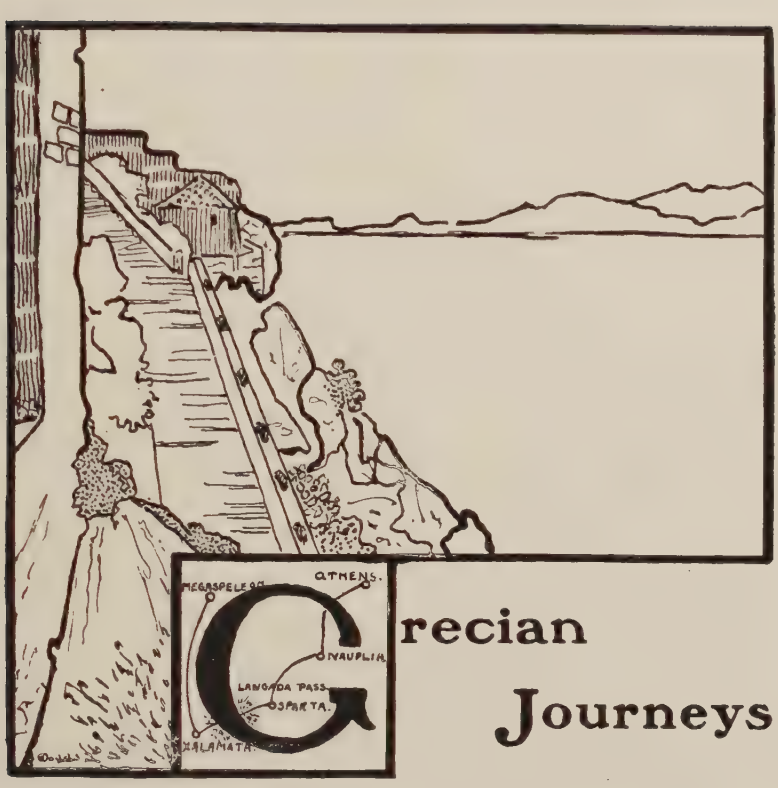
But if at sunset the Acropolis enchants us, moonlight amid the ruins brings a new inspiration and makes of those who linger there mute poets who feel within themselves a thousand cantos and strive vainly to give forth in words the thoughts that crowd upon them. But since Byron sang, no poet has found voice to utter all that these immortal marbles whisper to him. We are reduced, then, to mute wonder and admiration for the magnificent creations of those old Greeks, which after

more than two thousand years of the world's progress are still the nearest to perfection.

The Greeks of classic times soared higher than the greatest of our moderns in philosophic thought, in poetry, in the drama, in architecture, and in art. All that is best in us has been bequeathed to us by them. Let us, then, ere we bid farewell to Athens, freely and gratefully acknowledge our infinite indebtedness to Greece!

HERMES

GRECIAN JOURNEYS



Grecian Journeys

GREECE has long been considered as a field for classical research, as a subject for the historian and scholar, or as a mine of antique treasures to be opened only by the picks of learned archæologists.

But Greece is more than this. It is a delightful field for travel of the rambling sort, a fascinating subject for the mere chronicler of picturesque experiences, and a mine of interesting surprises which may be worked with profit and with pleasure by any one possessed of an eye for beauty and a love of travel ; the capital required for the opening of this mine being not learning but appreciation.

We have been taught to think of Greece as a land of dusty ruins, a land whose past completely overshadows its present, a land to be viewed only by the scholar steeped in classic lore, and from the heights of erudition.

To the modern traveler, however, Greece will reveal itself as it appears to those who lay aside the telescope of his-

ATHENS

tory and scholarship, focused so accurately upon antiquity, and look instead through the broad window of travel.

While it is only too true that the "Glory that was Greece" has passed away, the Beauty that *is* Greece remains.

The usual starting-point for a tour of Greece naturally is Athens. Let us find ourselves upon that classic height

THE PIRÆUS

the Acropolis, whence twenty-five centuries — and more — look down upon a city once the very heart of the ancient world, and even to-day one so fair and beautiful that we can scarcely credit her great age. Athens seems to draw from the arid yellow soil of Attica the sap of everlasting youth, which preserves upon her cheek, so often rudely buffeted by the barbarians of many lands and many epochs, the bloom of eternal freshness, and enables her to smile away the wrinkles of time, and to laugh back at the glaring sun, saying, "Thou thyself, O Apollo, shalt grow old and dim, yea, thou and thy glowing chariot the sun, ere I shall fade!"

Athens, however, is not to be our theme; we are to choose a field wider even than Attica; but first let us go to the port of Athens, to the thriving, modern-looking town familiar to the tourist as the Piræus. It has been called by a

French author "deplorably American;" but as it prides itself upon its commerce, this is perhaps a compliment. To-day, as in ancient times, the harbor is alive with ships, and the dust upon the four-mile road leading hence to Athens has, owing to the constant traffic, scarce a chance to settle. At the Piræus we engage a little boat and tell the skipper that we wish to sail across the gulf to the island of Ægina. The Greek looks blandly at us and repeats, "Ægina," and then shakes his head. A friend who knows a little modern Greek comes to our rescue, and with a smile the boatman answers, "Oh, *Egg-ee-na*" and we begin to realize that a certain command of college Greek does not in all respects prepare a man to visit Greece. The modern Greeks speak of Thermopylæ as "Termopeelee," and as we go onward, we find that in a thousand other cases they disregard the arbitrary pronunciation of the scholastic world.

ÆGINA

AN ISLAND SHRINE

Ægina was the home of the richest and most enterprising merchants of the old Greek world ; merchants, whose fleets traded in far seas. It cost Athens many years of warfare to subjugate this hostile state, a mere island but a score of miles away and within sight of the Athenian Acropolis. Strange, is it not, to find the Greek world geographically so small ? But these small states were mighty, in another sense ; for when presently we pass the isle of Salamis, we remember that the fleets of little Ægina bore themselves bravest of all in that great naval battle of antiquity. These

CANAL OF CORINTH

CORINTHIANS

waters, over which graceful little ships are to-day gliding peacefully, are red now in the sunset glow as on that awful day when they were dyed in Persian blood. You have all read the story of that fight, and know how, after the Greek defeat at Thermopylæ, the Persians entered Athens, while the Athenians took refuge in their ships here in the straits of Salamis. We have read how the great Persian fleet bore down upon them ; how Xerxes, the haughty leader of the Asiatic hordes, sat throned upon a promontory to survey at ease the annihilation of the blockaded Greeks ; and then how, urged on by Themistocles, the Athenians and their allies resolved to conquer or to die, and how they did not die but conquered gloriously.

A tragic poet has left us a word-picture of the scene : —

At first the main line of the Persian fleet
Stood the harsh shock, but soon their multitude
Became their ruin ; in the narrow frith
They might not use their strength, and, jammed together,
Their ships with brazen beaks did bite each other
And shattered their own oars. Meanwhile the Greeks
Stroke after stroke dealt dext'rous all around,
Till the ships showed their keels, and the blue sea
Was seen no more, with multitude of ships
And corpses covered. All the shores were strewn
And the rough rocks with dead ; till in the end
Each ship in the barbaric host, that yet
Had oars, in most disordered flight rowed off.
Then black-eyed night shot darkness o'er the fray.

Next day the Persian army on the land withdrew in hot retreat, and the victorious Greeks returned to rebuild their ruined Athens in new splendor.

PROFESSOR RICHARDSON AT CORINTH

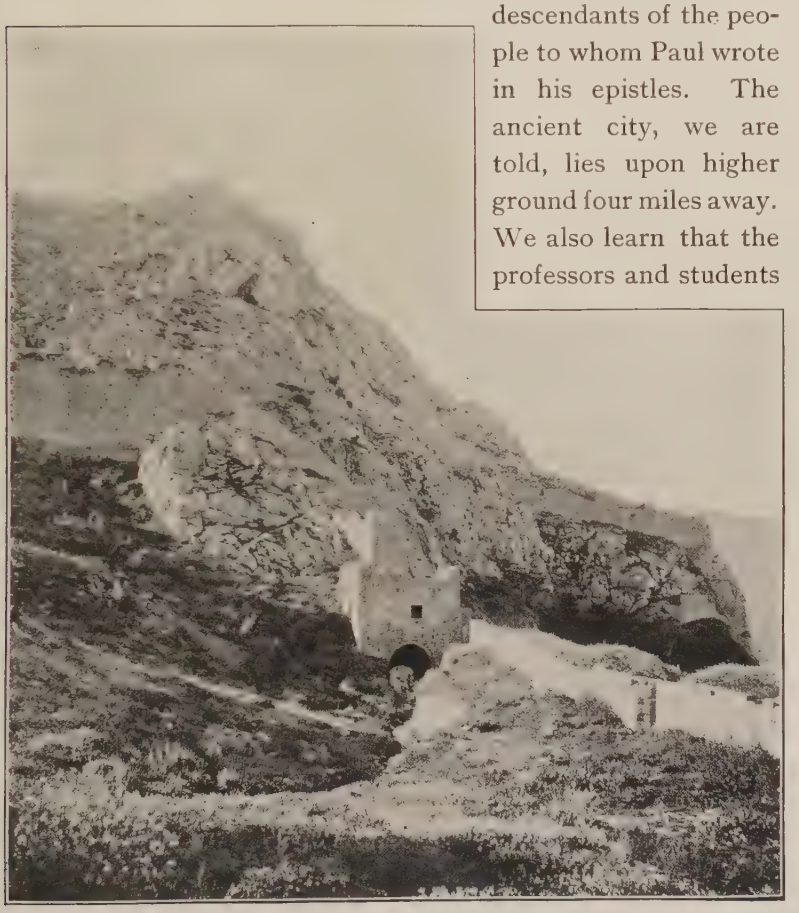
But, as has been said, Athens is not our theme; our journey is to be around the Peloponnesus, the great peninsula of Greece. The great *island*, rather let us say, for the Peloponnesus has become an island. The Corinthian canal now joins the waters of the Ægean Sea and those of the Corinthian Gulf, and severs the land of the Athenians and Thebans from that of the Messenians and Spartans. Work on the canal was commenced by the ancients, and the modern workmen began their digging where the slaves of Nero, centuries ago, laid down their tools.

As our train creeps slowly over a high bridge, almost two hundred feet above the waters, it may be noted that the canal is three and a half miles long, and at the water-level one hundred feet in width. A very

DELPHIC EXHIBIT AT THE PARIS EXPOSITION

grave defect is that its walls are almost perpendicular, as frequent cavings-in attest. One day we walked through the canal along a narrow footpath there below ; and I assure you that the promenade was not a pleasant one. Evidences of recent landslides were everywhere conspicuous, while yawning cracks gave promise of the impending fall of other sections of the unsubstantial walls.

A mile or two beyond we reach the modern Corinth, in aspect a large, straggling village in whose streets we behold descendants of the people to whom Paul wrote in his epistles. The ancient city, we are told, lies upon higher ground four miles away. We also learn that the professors and students



ON THE ACRO-CORINTHOS

of the American Archæological school of Athens are now conducting excavations there, the first serious ones ever undertaken on the classic site.

Accordingly we make our way to the little village which stands upon the grave of the buried city. We are welcomed by Professor Richardson, the director of our school. Under his direction and that of the American students, a hundred or more laborers are working lustily as if preparing to defend the place against a siege. We see here only a small part of the

THE FISHERS HAUL THEIR NETS

scene of operations. Almost every street in the village has been turned wrong-side-up. Our learned men in Greece are there looked upon with as much horror as are the directors of a gas-company at home, being possessed with the same mad desire to dig up everything! But here the citizens are paid for all annoyance caused them; employment is given to five-score of villagers, and, moreover, the school is unfortunately under contract to fill up the trenches when they have satisfied themselves as to the general topography of ancient Corinth. As he leads us toward other diggings, the Professor tells us that with only a few meager thousands of dollars they

STEPS OF THE PALAMIDI

can hope to do little more than locate the public buildings. This knowledge, however, will enable them to work to good advantage, when, thanks to the rich man's generosity, they shall find themselves prepared to buy out the inhabitants and uncover the entire site. The French have just spent two million francs at Delphi, and their wonderful discoveries there have made the abode of the Oracle a glorious monument to the intelligence and lavishness of France. Why shall we not likewise resurrect a city here in Greece, and thus repay the debt of gratitude which we, with every civilized nation, owe to the learning and art of ancient Greece?

Until this work was begun, all that was visible of Corinth was a group of stone monoliths twenty-one feet in height and six feet in diameter. Short, fat, and very comfortable

NAUPLIA

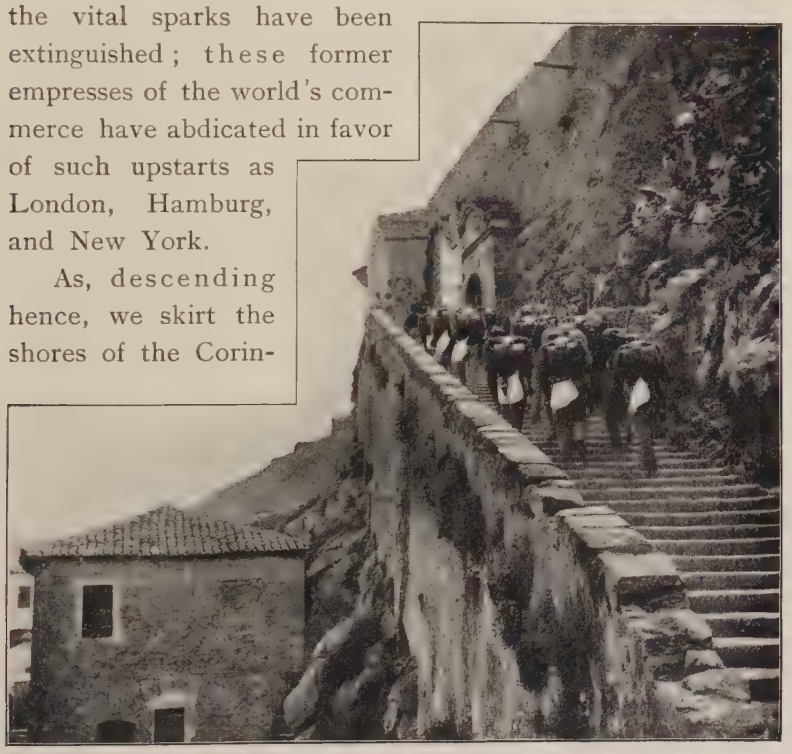
in appearance, they typify the sleek and prosperous merchants of that city of shopkeepers in the midst of which they stood. Strange, is it not, that the only columns standing now in Corinth are not Corinthian but Doric?

From the rocky summit of the Acro-Corinthus, Athens itself may on clear days be plainly seen. The ascent is long and difficult, and although fortune does not favor us by granting us unclouded distant views, we are repaid for all

THE PALAMIDI

our labor by the sight of the ruin of a wonderful Venetian stronghold which caps the summit and extends its walls in great confusing zigzags down the slopes, on every side, as if they would embrace the whole of the stupendous rock as Venice strove to embrace within her jeweled arms the medieval world. Most impressive is it to look down from these battlemented walls, evidences of the power of Venice, upon the shattered temple which tells of the supremacy of Corinth, likewise a great commercial city, and to realize that the glory of both has passed away. True, the lovely, delicately tinted shell of Venice still floats upon the placid lagoon waters. True, a collection of hovels around a stately temple still bears the name of Corinth. But the souls have fled, the vital sparks have been extinguished; these former empresses of the world's commerce have abdicated in favor of such upstarts as London, Hamburg, and New York.

As, descending hence, we skirt the shores of the Corin-



"DEVELOPING MAGNIFICENT LUNGS"

GREEK SOLDIERS IN NAUPLIA

thian Gulf, the rolling sun which has beheld the glory of the past and the abandonment of the sad present, sinks unconcernedly to rest; the fishers haul their nets and sing their songs; the waters lap the shore; while from the land there comes the plaintive wail of a shepherd's flute — a sound which on this shore and at this hour thrills us deeply. And my companion, an American Philhellene, repeats in subdued tones four lines which give with exquisite simplicity this picture of the land: —

A shepherd's pipe,
A sense of peace,
A long sweet silence, —
That is Greece.

Next day we travel southward to the headwaters of another great fiord of Greece, the Gulf of Argolis. It is

not possible to journey far in southern Greece without touching suddenly one of those many long graceful arms with which the blue sea holds the Peloponnesus in her fond embrace. Our journey brings us in turn to the shores of five splendid gulfs, each of which bears an immortal name and the stamp of an eternal beauty. The city there below us is known as Nauplia, and it was in ancient days the port of Argos and Mycenæ. Hence Agamemnon sailed to conquer Troy. In the distance loom the mountains of Arcadia, which we are soon to cross, while on yonder tiny island is the solitary abode of the sole public-executioner of Greece, who there seeks shelter from the scorn of his fellow-men.

EPIDAURUS

The elevation from which we view the lovely site of Nauplia is known as the Palamidi, a fortress built by the Venetians and the Turks and reached by one of the most astonishing stairways in the world. Only a fraction of its interminable ascent can be included in the angle of the lens, so steep it is and so tortuous are its windings. From a favorable point about sixty steps may be counted ; the entire stairway is composed of eight hundred and fifty-seven, or fourteen times as many as are visible to us. Far above are the walls and towers of the fortress, now used as a prison ; but we found it difficult to pity the prisoners, for they had naught to do but to look upon one of the loveliest panoramas on all the Grecian coast. Rather more to be pitied are the soldiers of the garrison, for every day they are marched many times up and down these deadly stairs. A period of duty on the Palamidi of Nauplia must either develop mag-

THEATER AT EPIDAURUS

AN ANCIENT SANATORIUM

nificent lungs or send the soldiers gasping to the hospital.

Nor must we forget that Nauplia has played its part in modern history; it was the seat of the first government of free Greece, when for a brief period John Capo d'Istrias was president of the ephemeral republic. Moreover, when, as a result of an international conference, Greece was made a kingdom, and a Bavarian prince selected by the foreign powers was sent to become its ruler, it was here that the young King Otho landed, in 1833, to begin his reign. Here, also, thirty years later, he ended it; for, returning from a tour of the continent, the unpopular king was advised by his people not to come on shore, but to continue his travels and make room for a monarch more congenial to them. King Otho's successor, King George

RETURNING FROM MARKET

PEASANTS

was not the first choice of the Greeks. They would not elect one of themselves as king; so democratic are they by nature that no Greek will admit the right of another to rule over him. But a king being essential, the people by an almost unanimous vote chose the late Prince Alfred, one of the sons of Queen Victoria. Unfortunately, England was bound by treaties with the other powers not to sanction the election of any of her royal line to the throne of Greece. Prince

DR. SCHLIEMANN'S RESIDENCE IN ATHENS

Alfred therefore put aside the crown, and it was offered to the second son of Denmark's king, brother to Queen Alexandra. In 1863, he was crowned king of the Hellenes. Between the king and his people there are no orders of nobility.

There are two excursions from Nauplia which every traveler should make. The first is to the sacred Sanatorium at Epidaurus. A drive of five hours brings us to ruins

MYCENÆ

which mark the site of the great temple of Æsculapius, the god of healing, who performed here in ancient times miraculous cures. Pilgrims came hither from many distant lands, bringing their maladies and ailments, their offerings and prayers, and, those who were of a practical mind, their bedclothes and provisions. As we rest on the marble seats where patients of old used to sun themselves and discuss their sufferings and hopes of cure, we remember that there were no doctors here, no scientific treatment. The god

THE MUSEUM, ATHENS

visited the pilgrims in their dreams, and prescribed the remedies, which were administered with the assistance of the priests next day. Inscriptions found here tell us of lame men who arose and ran after those who had stolen their crutches, of the man who came hither with no hair on his head but with plenty on his chin, and who after a prayerful sojourn of a single night departed with a hirsute halo, rivaling that of any modern musical phenomenon.

While we view the splendid theater of Epidaurus, where the patients were amused and instructed, we recall a most astonishing treatment that was given to a bow-legged man. The patient was ordered to lie prostrate on the ground before the temple; then a four-horse chariot was driven over him, until his legs were straight!

The fees were often large. A blind man on being cured refused to pay the exorbitant price demanded. The priests in most businesslike fashion immediately deprived him of sight.

And as we return toward Nauplia in the coolness of the evening, meeting many peasants coming from the weekly market held in town to-day, my learned friend, discoursing

HALL OF THE MYCENÆAN TREASURES

about Epidaurus and its cult, assures me that sometimes in those old days, as at Lourdes to-day, the worshipers held all-night vigils, standing before the temple with prayers and invocations; and that at rare intervals, in the exaltation of the moment, the expected miracle was performed, and one or two of the multitude apparently cured, departed, praising the god. And as another group of peasants march past at a swinging pace, pursuing their long shadows, driven before them by the retreating sun, my friend, turning to lighter

CONTENTS OF A MYCENÆAN TOMB

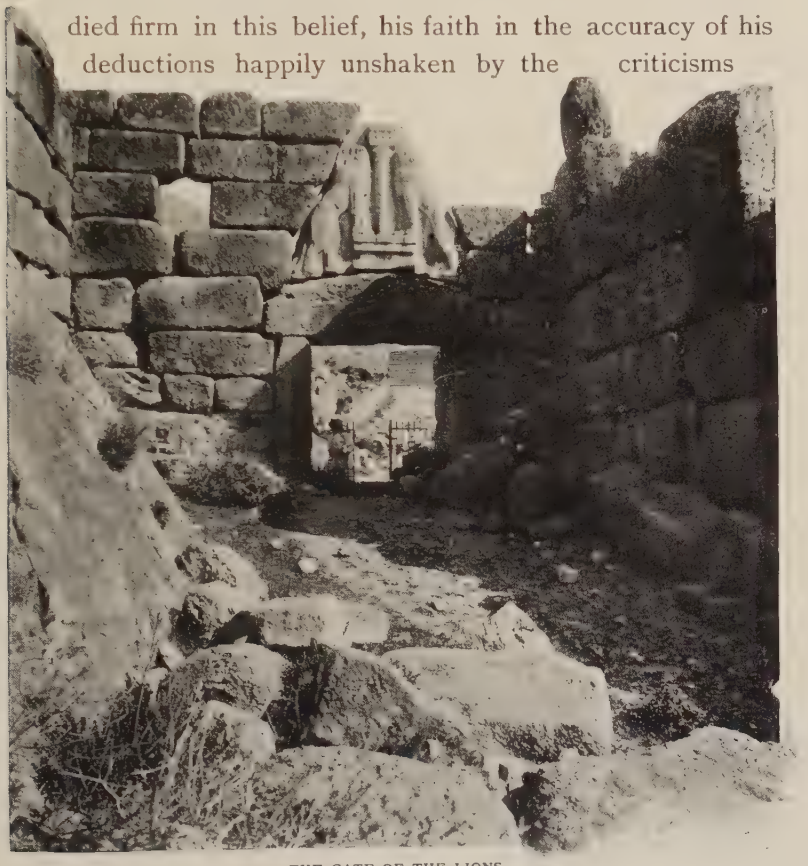
things, reads me the translation of a prescription found at Epidaurus. It is as follows: "Never give way to anger; submit to a diet of bread and cheese and lettuce, of lemon boiled in water and milk with honey in it; run much and walk barefoot before bathing; take a warm bath with wine in it and give a drachma to the bathing-man; rub yourself with salt and mustard; gargle with cold water; finally — and this is all important — make sacrifices, and do not forget to pay the fees before departing." The patient so advised certainly deserved relief even if he received it not.

The second excursion is even more interesting than the first; it is to the scene of the most remarkable archæological discoveries ever made in Greece, to Mycenæ, where Dr. Schliemann, the discoverer of Troy, found and unearthed in the year 1876 a prehistoric treasure of vast intrinsic worth, and revealed to us a civilization more than antique,—a civilization of which the modern world knew practically nothing until it was disclosed by the spade.

But before we approach more closely the scene of his excavations, let us recall a few facts concerning this man himself. Dr. Schliemann's life was in a certain sense a romance. Born to poverty, he died not only rich in this world's goods, but rich in the thought that the dearest objects of his life had, despite all difficulties, been successfully accomplished. As we stand before his palatial resi-

DR. SCHLIEMANN'S MAUSOLEUM

dence in Athens, let me ask you to imagine him when he was a little boy beginning life in a grocer's-shop, but animated by a resolve to make a fortune, in order to spend it in a search for the cities of which he had read in the poems of Homer. This in itself is remarkable. How much more so is the fact that the grocer's-boy not only made the fortune, but actually discovered and uncovered Troy. And not content with this he sought and found Mycenæ, the city of Agamemnon and the tomb and the golden treasures of that legendary king—treasures which are now enshrined at Athens in the National Museum. At least Schliemann died firm in this belief, his faith in the accuracy of his deductions happily unshaken by the criticisms



THE GATE OF THE LIONS

of more learned but much less successful archæologists. It was in 1871 that Schliemann dug the first trench at Troy. Having laid bare the site of King Priam's capital, he came to Greece to seek the city of Agamemnon, the conqueror of Troy; and, as before, success crowned his endeavor, and the fruits of his labors at Mycenæ are now the most precious possessions of the National Museum.

I defy the most hardened traveler to traverse this room listlessly. The Schliemann treasures possess a power of attraction which is irresistible. These cases are filled with ornaments in pure gold. The mere bullion value of the metal exceeds $20,000, but the objects fashioned of that prehistoric gold are also of priceless artistic value. Exposed to our gaze are ornaments of gold which were made not later than twelve hundred years before the birth of Christ.

INNER SIDE OF MYCENÆ GATE

SITE OF THE FIVE TOMBS, MYCENÆ

Some authorities affirm that these bits of handiwork were new when the beginning of the Christian era was as far in the future as it is now in the past; thus giving them an age of almost four thousand years. And these things are not mere scraps of metal. Here we may see gorgeous diadems bristling with golden leaves, richly decorated with strange designs; ear-rings and pins and pendants and gold rings of curious design, bronze swords, upon the blades of which we may still discern hunting-scenes, figures of men and lions all inlaid in gold; and, more numerous than all, bright disks of the yellow metal, each one about two inches in diameter like gigantic spangles adorned with a more than archaic

pattern hammered out by the hands of goldsmiths belonging to a race of which we have no definite knowledge.

And what purpose did these things serve, you ask? That question is quickly answered if we stoop and look into the lower section of the central case. Here we see extended on a bed of pebbles the mortal remains of two of the unknown but princely beings, who in some remote period of our world were buried at Mycenæ. They were arrayed in regal magnificence, appareled for the grave in

EN ROUTE TO SPARTA

splendid robes, all glittering with disks of gold, the heads surmounted by those delicate artistic diadems of gold, the hair retained in ringlets by spirals of pure gold, the fingers weighted with intaglio rings of gold, and, strangest thing of all, the faces, those old, old faces before which a subject nation trembled in the dim, dim past, were covered each with a sheet of beaten gold, very pure and thin, which had been molded to the features and formed a mask of gold. This mask lies to-day in an adjoining case, a grinning carica-

TIRYNS

ture of this unknown king, this king whom it so pleases us to christen Agamemnon. Here also are the jars and vases containing food and drink and offerings for the dead. And all these things are placed here just as they lay in the Mycenæ tombs when these were opened.

And now to see the place where all these things were found. Schliemann was not without a most emphatic indication that the abandoned Acropolis of Mycenæ well

TAYGETUS FROM THE SPARTAN HIGHWAY

deserved investigation. Long before he began his operations there, the now famous gate of the lions had been discovered. In fact, it had never been completely buried; and who, looking upon so impressive a ruin, would not at once divine that this was not all — that something of even vaster import must lie concealed within the precinct guarded by those headless, prehistoric lions, which in design and pose speak of an unknown art. Schliemann was seeking the unknown. Here was a hint which, emphasized by the allu-

IN MODERN SPARTA

sions of ancient writers, was too strong to be disregarded. With a force of several score of men, Schliemann and his wife began to dig, hopeful of much, but scarcely daring to hope for so impossible a reward as that which awaited them.

Let us pass through the gate and enter the agora, or meeting-place, where in 1876 Dr. Schliemann brought to light that curious double circle of upright slabs, upon which horizontal slabs were placed, forming a circular bench as for the sittings of an assembly Then, digging deeper, he came upon archaic tombstones with reliefs of hunting scenes and warriors in chariots. Deeper were found pieces of pottery, arrow-heads, bone buttons, and then, deeper still, twenty-one feet below, some scattered skeletons. Then at last,

hollowed in the rock itself, were five shallow tombs, containing fifteen bodies, buried with all that unheard-of lavishness and splendor, covered with ornaments, diadems, masks, breastplates, all of solid gold; and, surrounded with innumerable precious vases, objects in alabaster and in ivory, inlaid daggers and many golden cups of rare design.

Homer spoke of Mycenæ as a city "rich in gold;" tradition made it the home of the conqueror of Troy. Can we blame Schliemann for believing that he had discovered the tombs of the Royal House of Agamemnon? It has been, unfortunately, the graceless task of scholars to destroy this romantic hypothesis. The royal dead have been proclaimed nameless. In history the nation to which they belonged is masked as were the faces of its princes in the tomb. But the names of Schliemann, Troy, and Mycenæ will be insep-

"AGOYATES"

arable while history endures. Nay, one more name must be added, that of Tiryns, a city which lay not far from here and which has been brought back to us by the same archæologist. Here we at last understood the term "Cyclopean walls," for these walls were built by the Cyclopes, and worthily do they sustain their reputation for massiveness and grandeur. We are now in one of the covered passages of the fortress of Tiryns, where the prehistoric builders produced the effect of the arch long before the principle of the arch had been discovered. The walls were nowhere less than twenty feet, in some places fifty-seven feet in thickness. The smallest blocks employed in the construction are

THE VALE OF SPARTA

THE APPROACH TO MISTRA

from six to ten feet long, and weigh from three to thirteen tons. And the knowledge of all these things, the dainty treasures of Mycenæ and the imposing masonry of Tiryns we owe to the efforts of the man who, while yet a mere boy, declared that he would find the cities that had been immortalized in epic verse by Homer.

Bringing our minds down from the mythic and heroic to the classic age, let us set out for the land of Lacedæmon, and find ourselves en route for Sparta, the city of Leonidas. We have now left railways behind us and are in an almost

MISTRA

untraveled region. Fortune has favored me with two ideal companions for the journey. One is the young English author, whose first book, "Dodo," brought him immediate celebrity. An ardent archæologist also, he spends much of his time in Greece, studying old antiquities and seeking new ones — if the phrases may be permitted. He is now traveling far around the Peloponnesus for the third time, his object being to correct upon the spot the manuscript of a new book, a story of the War of Liberation, the Greco-Turkish war of four score years ago. The other companion of our wanderings is an artist who comes, commissioned by the

THE ABANDONED CHURCH AT MISTRÆ

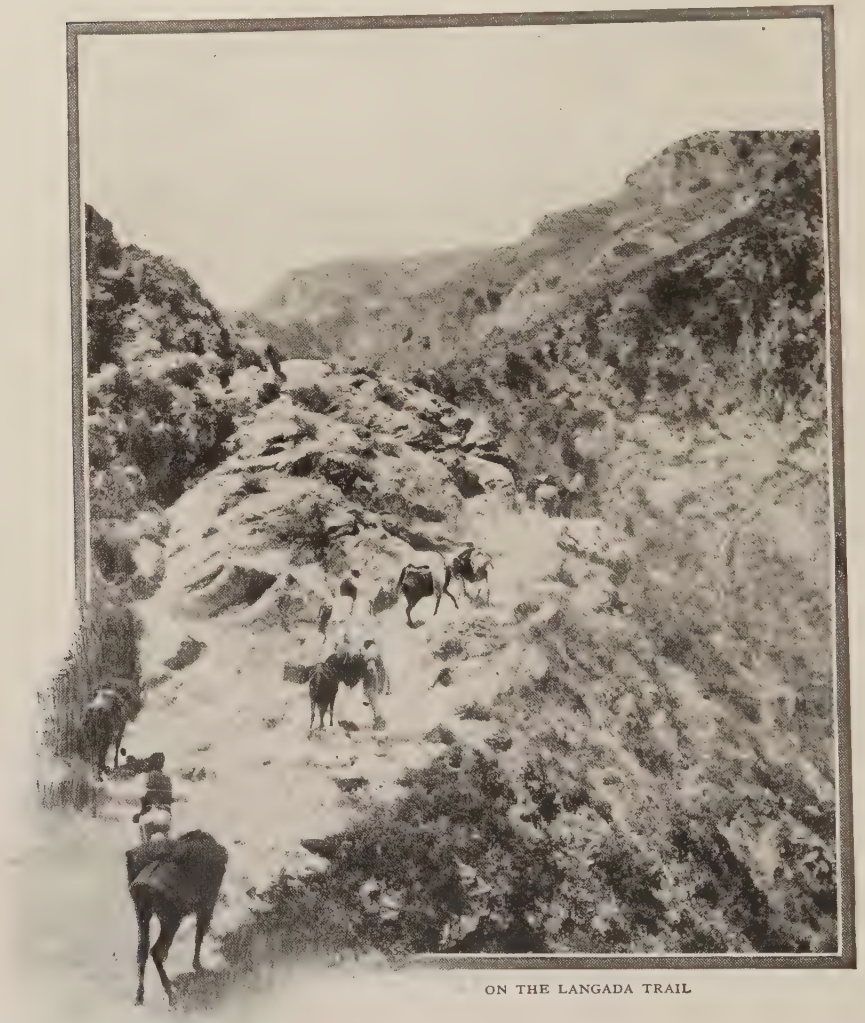
LEAVING SPARTA

publisher, to illustrate the author's work; and thus you see why these two are for me ideal companions. One knows the country and the language perfectly, and is well versed in history; the other, with the artist's eye, is always looking for the picturesque.

Modern Sparta is a town so commonplace and so devoid of antique remains that we shall care to recall only the main street, where one morning we made the acquaintance of the ponies, mules, and men destined to accompany us upon our long caravan expedition through the mountains to Arcadia. The author and the artist are already mounted; at the left is Mr. Charles Papadopoulos, our dragoman-in-chief; next to

SUNSHINE AND DESOLATION

him is our cook, a rather soiled and seedy personage, Gregorio by name (whose culinary skill atoned for his unkempt appearance), and in addition to the dragoman and the cook and eight sturdy mules and ponies, we have in our train five Spartan guides called "*Agoyates.*" They are the owners of the animals, and their services are included in the daily pittance paid for the use of mule or pony. For



ON THE LANGADA TRAIL

THE LANGADA

many days these agoyates are to follow and serve us, scrambling after us on foot over rocky roads, from ten to twenty miles a day.

Before we set out across the mountains with these modern Spartans, let us look upon the land in which they dwell, the Vale of Sparta. To the westward rises the splendid mountain range of old Taygetus, its highest peak almost eight thousand feet above the sea, its slopes still flecked with snow. Taygetus forms indeed a picture of Spartan ruggedness; but what of the land itself? Its fertility and beauty dispel a historic illusion.

We have been taught to think of the Spartans as a race of sturdy mountaineers, inhabiting a barren alpine region,

where the soil was sterile, and where warriors were bred amid the frowns of nature. With what surprise, then, do we discover that the Vale of Sparta is the richest, most productive, and most beautiful in all the Peloponnesus!

But on the slope of the mountain that walls this paradise we find one of the most desolate scenes in Greece—the abandoned town of Mistra, the vague form of its crumbling fortress crowning a jagged spur of Mt. Taygetus. Mistra was founded by the Franks six hundred years ago; but many other conquerors of Greece have in time held sway at Mistra. The Byzantines drove out the Franks, the Turks in 1460 ousted the Byzantines. Then Venice for a time

IN THE GORGE

SPARTAN RUGGEDNESS

was mistress; then again it was the Turks, until in 1821 when the cry of independence was raised in Greece, news came to Mistra of the sack of Kalamata. Whereupon the Turkish population fled hence in terror. Ever since a curse has been upon the town ; an earthquake cracked its walls and laid low its structures, and Mistra is doomed to everlasting neglect and ultimate annihilation by the elements. The walls are crumbling away, so that we scarce can say where the natural rock ceases and where the masonry of man begins ; all is merged in a confusing mass of grayish desolation. Mistra, apparently, is fading into the rocky wall to which it has been clinging for six hundred years.

A mountain range, of which Taygetus forms a part, separates the territory of the Spartans from that of the Messenians. Not far from Mistra the mountain range is cleft asunder, as by the stroke of some prehistoric Roland, and

THE INN AT LADHA

it is through the mighty gorge created there that we are now to make our toilsome way. The Greeks call this defile Langada, which means "*the* gorge," for there is none equal to it in Greece. All day our laden mules struggle up and down a rocky trail, so rough in some places that progress is almost impossible, in other places so steep and slippery that even the sure-footed mules seem to lose their innate contempt of danger, hesitate, try to turn back, and almost shake with fear.

The limitations of photography prevent an adequate representation of the rough and awful nature of this gorge. As compared with the reality, my pictures are like scenes from some soft sylvan vale. Beauty, indeed, is to be found in the Langada, but beauty of a grim, stern sort; no gentle prettiness is there to mask the angry face of nature. On-

ward and upward slowly, half the day; then, after the cruel, winding path has lifted us four thousand feet above the sea, we begin a downward journey more difficult and dangerous than the ascent.

Here, indeed, is Sparta as we have imagined it; here the Spartan youth were trained in hunting beasts, that later they might better fight with men. And as we journey, it is not necessary to remind us that bravery was held the highest virtue by that sturdy race. When a Spartan boy won honors at the Olympian games, the prize awarded him by his own people was the post of danger in the next battle to be fought, an eagerly desired reward among a people whose chief glory lay in war. The Spartans also held matrimony

THE CUISINE

THE LADIES OF LADHA

in great honor. We are told that there were penalties imposed on men who married for the sake of money, on those who married late in life, on those who mis-married, and finally on those who did not marry at all. Again, Spartan boys, although they treated with respect most aged men, would not rise or give place at the approach of old men who had never married. No young man, they said, need rise for one who has no sons to return the courtesy in after years.

The day begins to wane while we are still high in this mountain region. And accordingly we halt at a village called Ladha, where the thoughts of my English companions turn toward tea, for it is five o'clock. Every day religiously at the stroke of five the author and the artist begin their devotions, and the incense of the fragrant tea-leaf rises from the shrines, or groves, or from the wayside inns of Greece.

Meantime the rooms we are to occupy are stripped of all doubtful furniture, the floors are washed, the cobwebs dusted down Then our apartments are refurnished with our own belongings, beds and bedding, rugs and chairs and tables.

THE MOUNTAINS OF MESSENIA

Thanks to the care of Papadopoulos we sleep in peace, a rare experience for the traveler in Greece; and thanks to the culinary skill of Gregorio, we dine supremely well, likewise a rare experience. The traveler who does not take a cook with him into the Peloponnesus should leave also his appetite at home.

Early next morning we resume our journey toward the valleys of Messenia. The scenery en route is marvelously wild and beautiful. To the left lie the unconquered regions of the Maniotes. Herodotus speaks of that long peninsula, as "the rugged nurse of liberty." Even while all the rest of Greece was under Turkish rule, the Maniotes were prac-

KALAMATA

THE WOMEN OF ELEUSIS

tically free. They hurled perpetual defiance at the Turk, who never really conquered them. As for tribute when they did occasionally consent to pay it, a Maniote warrior thrust at the trembling tax-collector a little purse of golden coin suspended from the point of a naked sword. There also the vendetta flourished and with a fiercer zeal than that of even the Corsicans the Maniotes avenged their family wrongs.

Our route, however, leads us into more peaceful territory ; and early in the afternoon our caravan enters the busy modern streets of a thriving seaport town, the present capital of old Messenia, the town of Kalamata. For all the architecture tells us we might be in Italy or Spain or southern

DANCING CHILDREN

France. It is the fate of busy towns to grow each year a little more like every other busy town, until in time commerce and progress will have banished all variety and set a common stamp upon every country in the world. We note in all the towns the absence of women in the streets, a reminiscence of the times when the Turks ruled Greece. On festal days, however, the peasant women of the surrounding country appear in their brilliantly colored dresses, with yellow handkerchiefs upon their heads to indulge in the mild pleasures of the dance. Mild indeed; for dancing in Greece does not mean what it means to us. The women all join hands, and one man leads the dance, one beau for forty belles. He

A GRECIAN DANCE

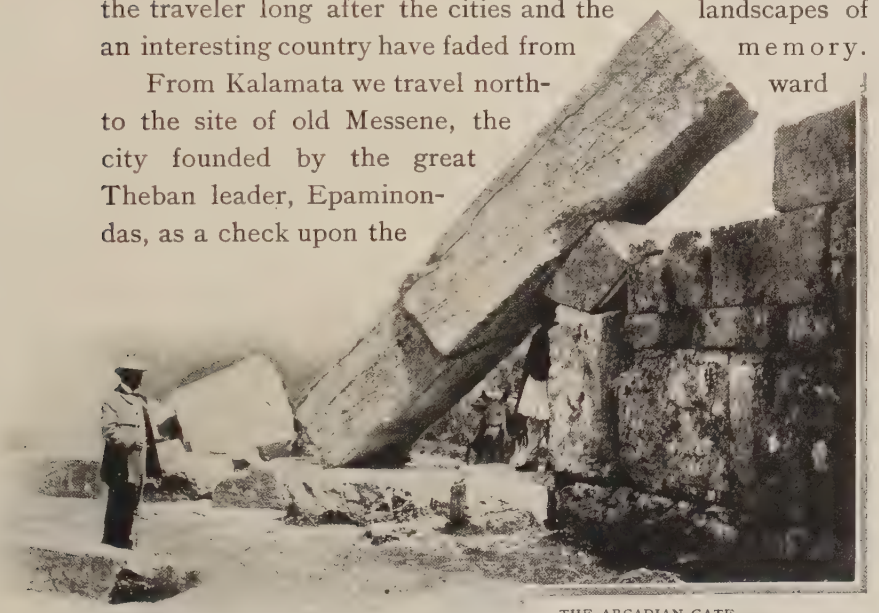
may not even touch the hand of the fair charmer nearest him, for she modestly extends to him a corner of her kerchief. Holding this gingerly, the leader of the Adamless cotillion begins to cut all sorts of capers, leaping, springing, turning, hopping, while the docile flock of débutantes follows him as he moves slowly on in curves or circles. Even the children seem to find much pleasure in this demure mode of tripping measures.

One day as I sat resting on a hilltop, looking off upon the sea, I heard behind me rhythmic footfalls in the grass, and turning, discovered a happy band of children dancing, as it appeared, upon the summit of the world. As they danced,

ANCIENT MASONRY

they sang a song, the words of which I could not understand. They circled round me a number of times, politely eying me ; and then after the dance was ended, one little girl approached and said, "Xenon (a stranger)?" and I answered, "Yes;" and then she said sweetly, "Oristi, Kiri (please take this, mister)," and handed me a little bunch of flowers, which she had gathered on the hill. Incidents like this are remembered by the traveler long after the cities and the landscapes of an interesting country have faded from memory.

From Kalamata we travel northward to the site of old Messene, the city founded by the great Theban leader, Epaminondas, as a check upon the



THE ARCADIAN GATE

ARCADIANS

power of the Spartans. The work of his builders was indeed well done; even to-day the walls and towers of dull gray stone are in many places well-nigh intact; and although the city itself has long since disappeared, these gates and towers that stood round about it now promise to last another score of centuries. We are to enter, through this gate called the Arcadian Gate, a land which, by name, is familiar to us all, "Arcadia." But, alas, Arcadia is not Arcadian, nor is it even called Arcadia, for the Greeks now pronounce it Ar-kā-deé-a. As a well-known author has remarked: "There is no name in Greece which raises in the mind of the ordinary reader more pleasurable or more definite ideas than the name Arcadia. It has become indissolubly connected with the charms of pastoral ease and of rural simplicity. The sound of the shepherd's pipe and maiden's laughter, the rustling of shady trees, the murmuring of gentle fountains, the bleating of lambs, and the lowing of oxen,—these are the

OUR ARTIST IN ARCADIA

ARCADIANS

images of peace and plenty which the poets have gathered about that ideal retreat. There are, however, no images more historically false, more unfounded in the real nature and aspect of the country. Rugged mountains and gloomy defiles, a harsh and wintry climate opposed to intelligence and culture, a poor and barren soil, tilled with infinite patience; a home that exiled its children to seek bread at the risk of their blood, a safe retreat for bears and wolves, this is the Arcadia of old Greek history!"

How, then, we ask ourselves, as we endeavor to make friends with a group of scowling inhabitants, did this false notion of Arcadia and Arcadians gain such universal recognition? Mahaffy, in one of his very charming books on Greece, sets forth the origin of this poetical conception of the land.

A PEASANT FAMILY

He assures us that he finds in literature no trace of this poetical Arcadia until the year 1500, when it was created almost instantaneously by an Italian writer. The poet Sannazaro, in consequence of an unrequited passion, exiled himself from Naples and wandered for a long time in the wilds of southern France. There he immortalized his grief in a pastoral medley of prose description and idyllic complaint, and called the book "Arcadia."

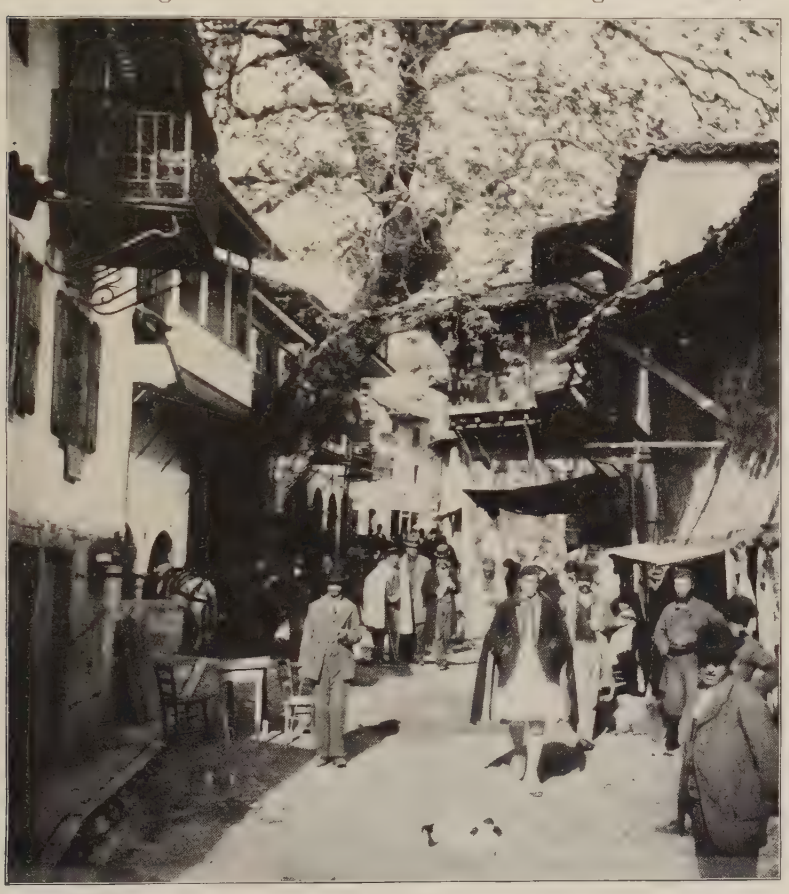
This book won instant popularity and ran through sixty editions. Although it was written in the year 1500, in France, and by an Italian, it really created the imaginary home of innocence and grace which has ever since been denoted by the name Arcadia.

A TEMPTING NOON-DAY NOOK

BASSÆ

Crossing this unhappy land, cursed like many a poor mortal, with a reputation too good for it to live up to, we boldly assault the mountain wall upon the north end, and after a long scramble up one of the steepest mule-trails in all Greece, after climbing skyward through cold and mist and rain for many hours, we at last behold that to see which we have climbed and suffered: the famous temple of Bassæ.

There is in Greece no scene more impressive than this ruin amid the mountain solitudes, rising from the gray rocks like a thing to which the earth itself had given birth, a



ANDRITZENA

natural product of this grim, sterile soil. Its only guardians are the ancient oak-trees, its only worshipers the infrequent travelers, pilgrims to the shrine of art. The sculptures of the frieze which formerly adorned this temple, were, in 1812, carried off to London, like so many other precious stones of Greece. But even ruined and despoiled as it is, the temple of Bassæ well rewards its pilgrims. Its situation is unique in grandeur. Although we are now far inland, in four different directions blue sea is visible. To the west the Ionian Sea, to the south the Messenian Gulf, a little to the east the Gulf of Argolis, to the north the Gulf of Corinth. On clear days all Greece is like a map spread out for examination.

PREPARING FOR A START

ALMOST LIKE TRAVELING
IN MOROCCO

But at the time of our visit the mists close in around us. Even here are signs of industry. This rocky soil all round about the temple has actually been plowed, grain has been planted, and some sanguine farmer hopes to reap a harvest even from the rocks. This, the last Arcadian scene, completes our second disillusion. We found Sparta a land of milk and honey. We find Arcadia an alpine wilderness.

A tiresome downhill scramble brings us again into a populated region, and before nightfall we are comfortably

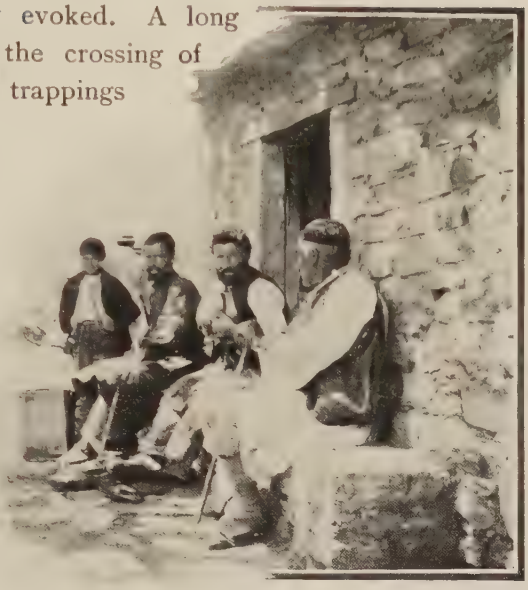
housed in the picturesque village of Andritzena. The narrow street, the overhanging eaves of houses sadly out of plumb, the tiny shops like niches in the walls, the red fezzes on the heads of skirted citizens,—all these things are evidences of the recent presence of a Turkish population,—now, fortunately, gone forever.

Here at Andritzena we bid farewell to our Spartan guides and animals, engaging in their stead another company of Agoyates and a caravan of ponies for the continuation of our journey northward.

Greece probably has never been likened to Morocco ; yet every day during the course of our expedition through the interior of Greece, souvenirs of the land of the African

AN AWKWARD LANDING

sultan were vividly evoked. A long day in the saddle, the crossing of a river, the Oriental trappings of the beasts of burden, the monotonous songs of the Agoyates, the ever brilliant sunshine, the sense of infinite freedom, —all these things carry our thoughts back to the Moorish Empire, whose trackless plains, and bridgeless rivers, and crumbling cities possess so great a charm. But the



BY THE ROADSIDE

MAY-DAY CROWNS

Moslem atmosphere is wanting ; here, for a hundred reasons, we cannot forget that we are in a Christian land.

On May day we are charmingly reminded that the month of Mary has commenced. In honor of the festival of the Virgin Mary, the entire population decks itself with flowers. Even common laborers wielding picks and shovels on the new military road have not forgotten that the month of May

SUNDAY IN A VILLAGE

has come. We find them toiling beneath a burning sun, amid the dust and glare, but on almost every head there is a diadem of roses. Was I not right in saying that modern dress is fatal alike to Greek dignity and beauty? These same men seen in native costume would appear as splendid specimens of rustic humanity. Unfortunately, the rising generation is inclined to follow strange gods and strange tailors, and the fine old costume is worn only by the aged.

A "KHAN"

After the passing of these old fellows and their contemporaries, the national Greek dress will be seen no more save in museums or at masquerades. The new generation, dressed like apes in graceless coats and baggy trousers, will then congratulate itself and prate of progress.

We made our noonday halt by invitation at a delightful house where the innate courtesy of our hosts and their unaffected pleasure in entertaining us added a relief to the simple fare provided. Such are the Greeks of the old régime. Less picturesque are the Greeks of the new régime, those who have been caught up by the wave of modernity that has swept across the land. Their houses and their

A MODERN RESIDENCE

dress reflect the commonplaceness of to-day. Only once did we accept hospitality for the night. The house, though new, was essentially Greek. My diary for that date contains the following war-report: "Pitched camp at 10 p. m., assured by local authorities that the enemy had been driven from the neighborhood; therefore no powder was used. Were attacked at midnight; enemy's loss, seven killed,

A GROUP OF PROMINENT CITIZENS

three wounded. Our injuries slight, but very irritating." Orders issued to Captain Papadopoulos not to credit assurances of optimistic friends in future, but to pepper the enemy regardless of the feelings of our hosts. Thereafter we eschewed the hospitality of local notabilities and lodged in wayside inns or "khans," as they are called, where, without hurting the host's feelings, we could turn his house wrong-side out, dust it off, scrub it down, refurnish it with

our own household goods, and then enjoy both cleanliness and picturesqueness, two things most difficult to reconcile in Greece. We dine in luxury, our chef preparing every night a dinner better than those served in hotels at Athens. We drink the native wine. It is always strongly impregnated with resin, giving it a peculiar flavor, but we learned to like it well, and called for it whenever we halted at one of the roadside inns or resting-places. At first the stranger thinks this resined wine abominable. It is said that an English bishop, after swallowing his first glass of native "rezinato,"

WE ARRIVE AT SUNSET

assured his host that his mouth was so puckered out of shape that he would not be able to speak the truth for a month. Another traveler affirmed that drinking rezinato was like licking the side of a freshly sawed pine plank. One good American imported a barrel of his favorite brand of rezinato. When it reached the Customs Inspectors in New York, the

A ROADSIDE REST

officials were at a loss as to the nature of the contents. They tapped the barrel to investigate, and as a result the American paid duty on a cask of turpentine. But let the ignorant scoffer spend a month in Greece, and rezinato will become to him as delicious as the nectar of Olympus, and ordinary wines will appear flat and tasteless. Greek mastica,

WE DEPART AT SUNRISE

WE MEET PRIESTS EVERYWHERE

too, we find deliciously cooling and grateful in the course of the long hot days. But all wine, all meat is good to him who travels as we do, who sits to eat and drink in the tempting noonday nooks along the way.

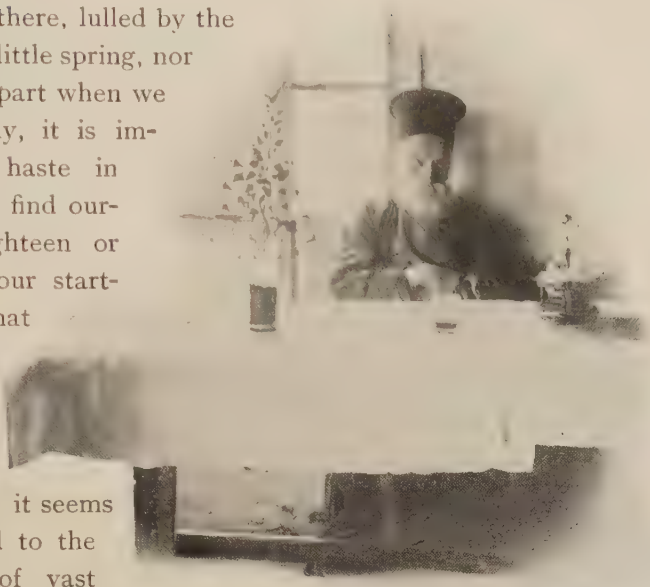
Here is Arcadia indeed, Arcadia as we have dreamed of it. We have often rested in the shade of splendid plane-trees, but nowhere have we found a nobler one than that which with its wide spreading branches, one day roofed our banquet hall. It was hollow, and in its trunk a sort of grotto had been formed, a grotto with walls of wood, and a floor of rocks, held firmly by the sturdy

MASTICA

roots. A little streamlet issues thence, for a fine spring of cool, clear water has burst forth within this curious grotto, forming a minute cascade and a tiny pool, in which the face of some fair nymph must surely have been daily mirrored, ere we moderns came to frighten her away. Then in a recess there is a broad, low, natural couch covered with fine green moss, soft and luxurious; and because the English author owns an Arcadian shepherd's cloak, he claimed the right to take his midday sleep there in the tree, holding that he, wrapped in that shaggy mass of coarse gray wool, harmonized far better with the pastoral scene than we who wore the more ugly garb of this convenient century. And for two hours or

HERE IS ARCADIA AS WE HAVE DREAMED OF IT

more we slumbered there, lulled by the music of the unique little spring, nor were we eager to depart when we awoke. Fortunately, it is impossible to make haste in Greece. When we find ourselves at night eighteen or twenty miles from our starting-point, we feel that we have done a very good day's work. Although Greece is one of the smallest countries in Europe, it seems to us — as it seemed to the ancients — a land of vast extent. Railways have not annihilated distance; they have only taught us to forget it. What they have annihilated is the romance of travel.



PEACE

A few years more and Greece, compactly girded by rails of steel, will lose her charm; then there will be no more noonday naps in places such as this, no more sunrise departures from awakening villages, no caravaning away through orange and lemon orchards, or along delicious byways deep in shade; the traveler will hear no more the music of those tiny bells upon the ponies' necks, those bells which play a sweet, clear little melody, each bar of which, while seeming but a repetition of that already tinkled, is never

A HAPPY FAMILY

quite the same. Thus we jog on for many happy days, sometimes on foot, sometimes on pony back, where we sit astride, aside, or facing backwards, as best suits our mood.

Thus for weeks we traveled, free from care and from discomforts and as happy as mortal man can ever hope to be. At last, one regrettable day, we reach a railway on the shore of the Corinthian Gulf. There we are to await a train. Near by we find a modest inn, where we lunch in company with a dear old priest, who falls asleep over the glass of wine in which he drank our health.

The priests of the Greek Church are encountered everywhere in Greece. Their long black robes, their curious black hats, are seen in every crowd; no street scene is

RAILROADING IN GREEK GORGES

complete without them; even in the interior, far from villages and cities, we meet them every day, sometimes tramping, sometimes seated in majesty upon a burro or a mule, but always clad in black, always long-haired and long-bearded, always dignified, but ever ready to exchange a polite greeting, to ask us of our journey, and ever eager to know our nationality. At the mention of America a look of interest comes into their eyes, "Ah, yes," they say, "America; that 's where the great athletes come from." Greek priests live nearer to their people than priests of other churches; they are usually poor, receiving no salary, but reaping in the way of offerings from one hundred to two hundred dollars a year. Many rural priests are farmers and sometimes those in towns keep shops, for many of them, as you know, are men of family and must support the wife and children. Only the monks and bishops are debarred from matrimony

EN ROUTE TO MEGASPELEON

But having seen these holy men at large, we must make them a visit in their historic stronghold, the largest and most populous of all the monasteries in the land, the Monastery of Megaspeleon, one of the most remarkable monastic structures in the world. To reach it we must travel first by rail up through the Diakofto gorge ; and I assure you that this railway-ride is not to be a common one. We are to

THE GORGE GROWS WIDER AND WILDER

ride by rail in places where a mountain-goat would hesitate to risk his shaggy skin. It has been well said that modern Greece lacks the necessary, but consoles herself with the superfluous. What need is there of a railway in this gorge of Diakofto? What profit can there be in operating it? And to both questions we may answer, "There is none." This road, one of the costliest per mile of any ever built, leads whither? To a miserable mountain village. It trans-

ROOM ONLY FOR ROAD AND RIVER

ports what? A score of peasants every day, and every week perhaps a dozen tourists. A locomotive and one car suffice for the daily traffic. The speed never exceeds five

miles an hour, while on the steepest portion of the line where cog-machinery is used, progress is barely perceptible. Our car advances with a series of jerks, each one of which lands us a few inches nearer heaven. The car is crowded, hot, the windows are full of heads. While looking out on one side, we miss some splendid vista on the other. Then when we enter tunnels, the puffing locomotive belching out steam, hot air and gassy fumes fills the rocky cavern and the car itself with a deadly atmosphere; and when the train emerges, we find ourselves half suffocated, gasping for breath. The windows are then thrown quickly open, and all heads are thrust far out at risk of being bumped against the rocks, while our scorched lungs draw in selfish haste a cooling breath.

THE TRAIL TO THE MONASTERY

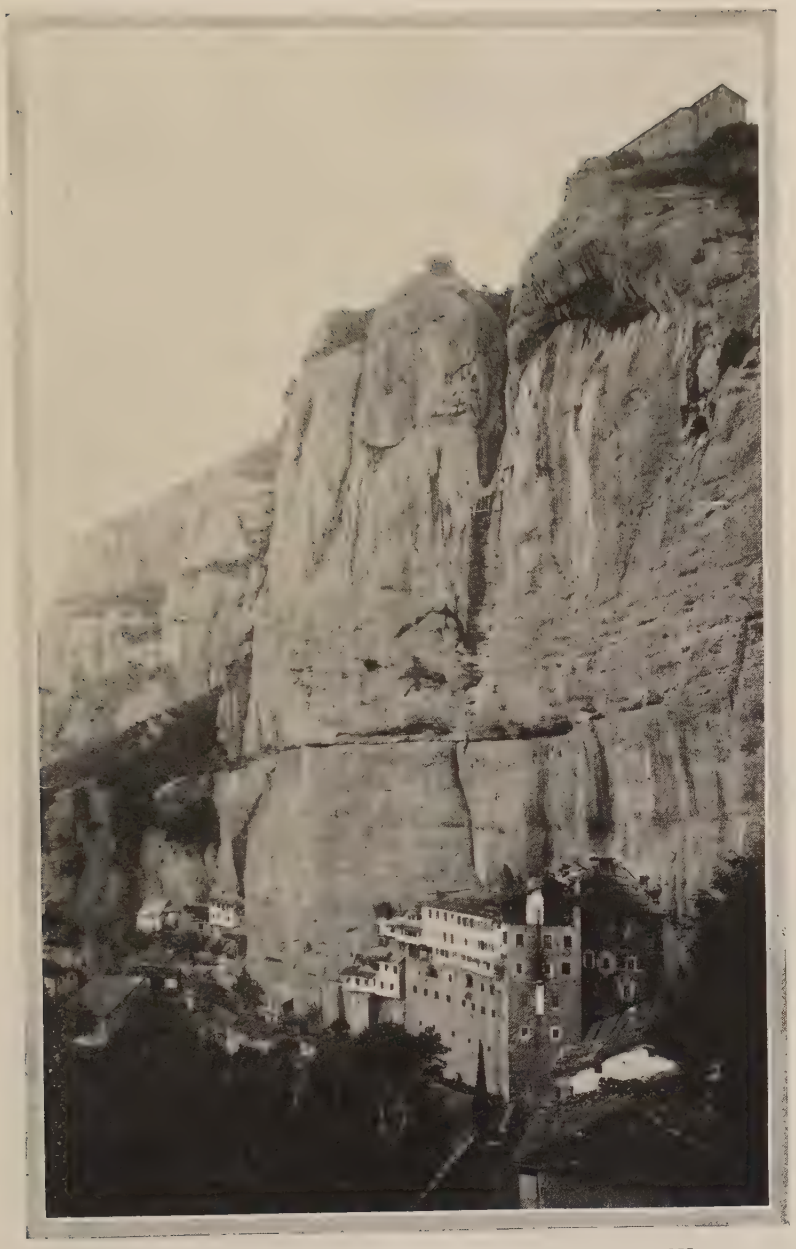
A VERTICAL VILLAGE

This ride soon became intolerable, and as our destination is only seven miles away, we decide to follow the example of a trio of American tourists who resolved to finish the trip on foot. So when, some moments later, the train stops to catch its breath, we leave the car, which with its stifling victims plunges into another of those awful tunnels, and continue our railway journey after the manner of the tramp, whose mode of travel is certainly the most delightful, when distances are short and scenery imposing. As I have said, this railway runs where goats would fear to travel. Certainly, it would be a very enterprising goat that would select his pasturage upon the sheer walls of this gorge, where it

narrows to a mere crack, in one place not more than ten feet wide. Yet the road of steel has dared to pass this spot; and we, taking advantage of this path, created by the foolish expenditure of millions of Greek drachmas, walk leisurely and comfortably through the rocky wall, across a little bridge of steel, beneath which the foaming torrent rushes, then through another tunnel, whence we emerge into the upper section of the gorge, where it is

MEGASPELEON

wider but even wilder and more picturesque. Here, however, we behold only the results of Nature's efforts to impress us; we are now to see how man, as if not satisfied with the results achieved by Nature, has created, in the name of religion, at the extremity of this gorge a Picture of the Impossible, a picture so remarkable in detail, so imposing in ensemble, so utterly unlike anything that we have ever seen before that I do not know how to describe it in words, nor do I feel that even pictures will suggest the



THE MONASTERY AND THE CLIFF OF MEGASPELEON

atmosphere of mystery, of medievalism, and above all, the atmosphere of *impossibility* which envelopes the Monastery of Megaspeleon.

The ascent which presently commences prepares us for the strange and unexpected. We leave the winding railway and the river and climb by a zigzag path up through a chaos, where the frowning gray and yellow rocks are masked in part by fresh green vegetation. A monk returning to the monastery guides us upward. Looking down, we see the path unwinding below us, like an immense ball of yarn, which rolling down the slope has formed a confusing series of loops and curves and angles.

THE CELLAR WALLS

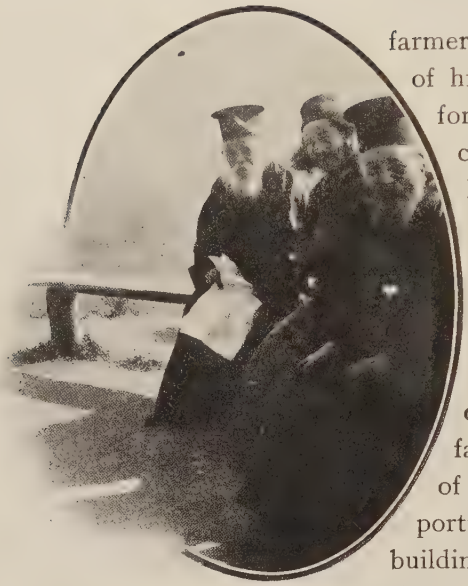
AN UPWARD GLANCE

A moment later and a sudden turn reveals to us an unexpected sight. We see what seems to be a village surrounded by gardens and tiny fields and vineyards ; but all this is not as it should be, for it occupies a vertical and not a horizontal plane. Can it be possible that while we have been prisoners in the gorge, the center of gravity has been shifted from its accustomed place, and that farms and houses no longer remain peacefully on level ground, but rise and stick themselves upon the face of upright cliffs? We grow dizzy as we try to count the little terraces ; at every turn we discover high up on yonder wall more and more buildings, miraculously clinging to the rock or wedged in crevices and fissures.

"So that is Megaspeleon!" we exclaim. "Not yet," our guide replies; "a moment more." Another turn. "Yes, that is Megaspeleon." Were we not out of breath with exertion, wonder, and surprise we should undoubtedly inquire, "How came it there?" "What holds it there?" "Why does n't it fall off?" "Who lives there?" and, above all, "Why has the world of travel never heard of this before?"

I am convinced that there are very few, even among those who may be called chronic travelers, who would not look blankly at you when you ask them, "Have you been to Megaspeleon?" We felt like discoverers as we approached this imposing pile, this relic of the greatness of Greek monasticism. Behind it a rocky wall reaches skyward for a thousand feet; from the foundations of the structure there descends a giant staircase, a series of narrow terraces, on which are the farms and gardens of the monks. The monks apparently have less need of plows than of parachutes!—for should a pious

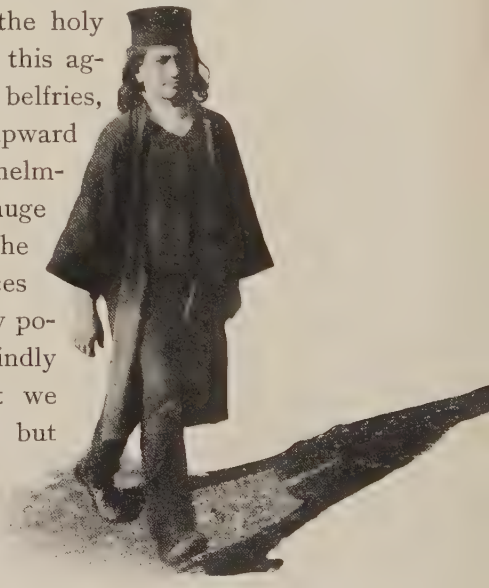
FISHERMEN FROM THE GULF OF CORINTH



MONKS OF MEGASPELEON

farmer ever step across the boundary line of his own plat of ground, he must fall forty feet or more before it can be charged that he has trespassed on his neighbor's soil.

And as we draw still nearer, we count the stories of this medieval skyscraper. Beginning at the top and counting downward we discover in all eleven stories. Six rows of cheerful windows pierced in the façade of the superstructure, five rows of gloomy openings in the grim supporting wall below. Here, then, is a building with a basement five stories deep, the windows of its lowest story overlooking mountains of no inconsiderable size. And all this, the growth of several centuries, is only the mask of Megaspeleon, for Megaspeleon means the "Great Cave." The real Megaspeleon, the great cave itself, the holy of holies, is screened from view by this agglomeration of cellars, dormitories, belfries, cells, and chapels. As we glance upward at the monastery, the effect is overwhelming. The cliff soars above it like a huge thunder-cloud of solid rock. From the innumerable windows, curious faces now peer down upon us. We bow politely to the monks, they with kindly gestures bid us welcome. At first we can discern no place of entrance; but following the narrow path we reach at last a sort of esplanade or terrace, a level space much



A NOVICE

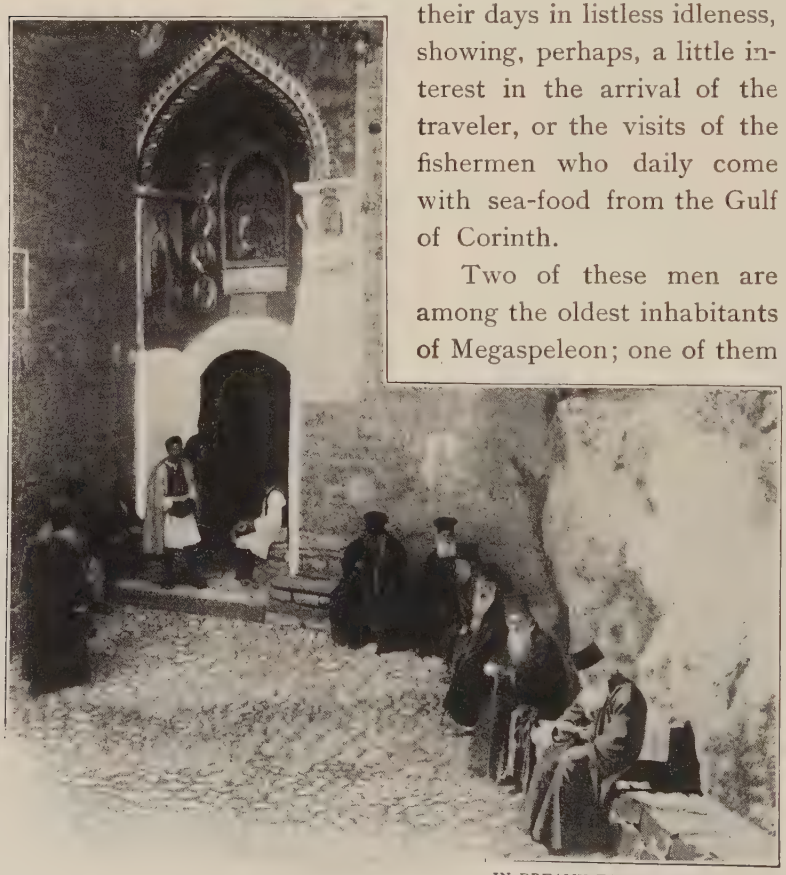
THE ABODE OF MONASTIC CALM

IN THE BELL TOWER

larger than we thought could possibly exist in such a place as this. We are very cordially received by three or four old fathers, after which they considerately leave us to ourselves. And we have need of rest, for the approach to Megaspeleon has resulted in great physical fatigue and greater mental perturbation. It takes the traveler an hour or two to collect his senses, to convince himself that he is not dreaming, that these startling things are real, and that he is living, not in the ninth or tenth, but in the nineteenth century. Meantime, rooms in the guest house on the right have been assigned to us, and the freedom of the kitchen granted to our guide and cook. Then later two or three old monks come out to welcome us in the name of the Higoumenos or abbot. Fine old fellows, every one of them. Here at last we find the old Greek type, men of imposing dignity, with long gray beards, long hair, long robes, and an air of superiority that is full of kindness, simplicity, and supreme contentment.

What is the world and all its modern marvels to these men? They are assured of shelter, food, good company, and peace; what more could a sane man desire? Life with us is a fever; with these old monks it is a peaceful dream,—

a dream, the veils of which are drawn close, a narrow selfish dream perhaps, but still a pleasant one. They seem intensely interested in the wealth and station of their visitors. The lecturer's profession is beyond their ken; the artist's work they understand, because he draws their likenesses; but the author they hold highest in esteem, because he writes books, and books are precious things — so precious that they are seldom handled by the monks. No, these old celibates do not trouble themselves with the acquirement of learning, which would be useless to them; they are content to spend their days in listless idleness, showing, perhaps, a little interest in the arrival of the traveler, or the visits of the fishermen who daily come with sea-food from the Gulf of Corinth.



IN DREAMY EASE

Two of these men are among the oldest inhabitants of Megaspeleon; one of them

ON THE TERRACE

is eighty-seven and the other ninety-five years old; the elder has lived over sixty years at Megaspeleon, the earlier portion of his life having been passed in other monkish institutions. Like all the rest, he began his religious vocation as a very young boy; and in some other monastery, long since fallen to decay, he, like the boys we find to-day at Megaspeleon, devoted his days to sweeping and cleaning the chapels and the cells, hewing wood and drawing water, praying, fasting, and preparing for eternity. The boys are sometimes almost girlish in their beauty, with their long tresses unconfined, their fine black eyes in which still shines the joy of living. During their early years much hard toil falls to their lot, and they labor industriously indoors or out, in the refectory or kitchen, or on the terraces amid the farms and gardens. Then, during middle life, they labor just enough to keep themselves in health; and finally, when old age comes upon them, it finds them ready

to fold their hands and join the coterie of aged monks, who sit all day in dreamy ease in a retired angle of the monastery terrace.

Here every day a dozen or more superb old men sit silently in the shadow of a towering wall. Then, when the sun sinks lower, they venture out upon the terrace, and in the twilight walk slowly up and down, each one a picture of patriarchal dignity and supreme content. Thus, with daily round of idleness and prayer, without study and without research, the monks of Megaspeleon live out, with few exceptions, the allotted three-score years and ten; when life is done, they rest in peace for a few years in consecrated

THE MONKS OF YESTERDAY

THE CHAPEL IN THE GREAT CAVE

ground, and then, when they have been almost forgotten, another generation, to make room for future dead in the small cemetery, exhumes their bones, and ranges their grinning skulls around the walls of a small chapel where all the former inmates of the convent have found a final resting-place. Here, all identities are lost, the bones of medieval monks being mingled with bones of those of later centuries.

We look into an unclosed grave of unknown depth. Far down at the very bottom of this common trench there doubtless lie the bones of the two holy men who founded Megaspeleon, who dwelt in the great cave before these medieval structures were erected. The legend runs that in the

fourth century after Christ, a shepherdess discovered in a cavern, hollowed by nature in this wall of rock, an image of the Virgin and the Holy Child. This she instantly recognized as the handiwork of St. Luke. Two holy men, Theodoros and Simeone, then made a chapel in the cave, and the sacred thing was worshiped. Its fame soon spread, pilgrims

FROM THE TOWER

flocked hither from distant lands; more holy men came here to dwell; and thus, room by room, house by house, the monastery grew, and the brotherhood waxed powerful until Megaspeleon became the largest and the richest of all the monastic institutions of medieval Greece. As yet we have not seen the cave itself, for it is hidden by this mask of six-

CLIMBING THE CLIFF

teen centuries' constructions. Nor does it seem a cave, when finally, with hesitant reverence, the brothers lead us into this sacred heart of the rock, this bejeweled cavern, where naught save the cool dampness of the incense-laden air suggests the subterranean. The pale illumination of the outer day touches with reverent fingers the silver lamps, the

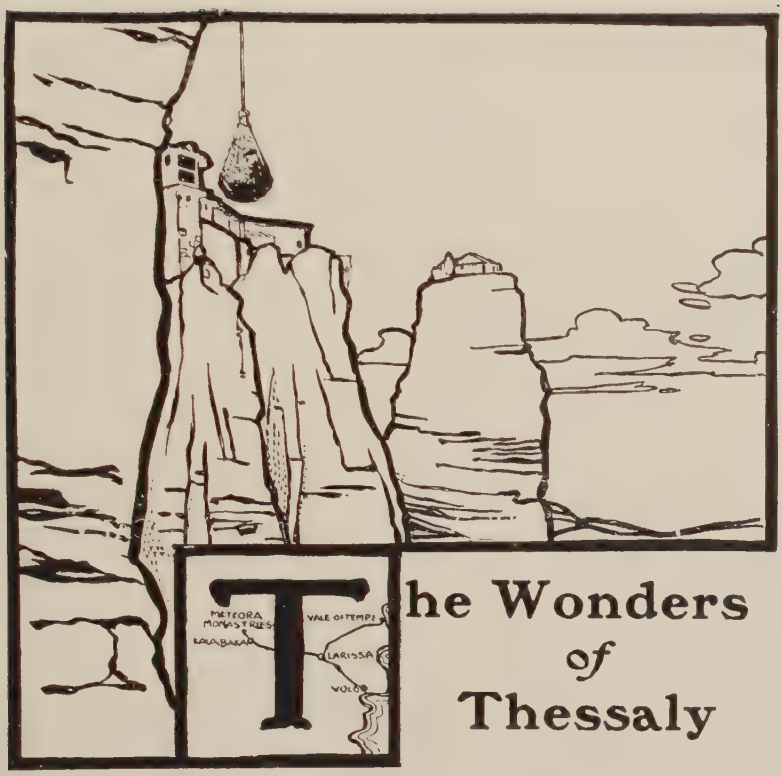
FROM THE SUMMIT OF THE CLIFF

carven woods; but like a penitent worshiper it scarcely dares approach the far dim corner where the faces of Mary and The Child, framed by the gold and silver of the most sacred icon in all Greece, are smiling, as they have done for sixteen centuries, the smile of pardon and eternal love. Here in the Holy of Holies of the old Greek faith they rest, guarded by

venerable men whose lives have been devoted to their charge, whose simple thoughts for years have been of sacred things. May peace be theirs on this side of the eternal veil; and may they find, when they shall pass beyond, that the reward of those who seek the truth on earth, whatever be their faith or creed, is a reward than which no human soul can ask a greater — a revelation of the mystery of life — a knowledge of eternal truth.

A VILLAGE PRIEST

THE WONDERS OF THESSALY

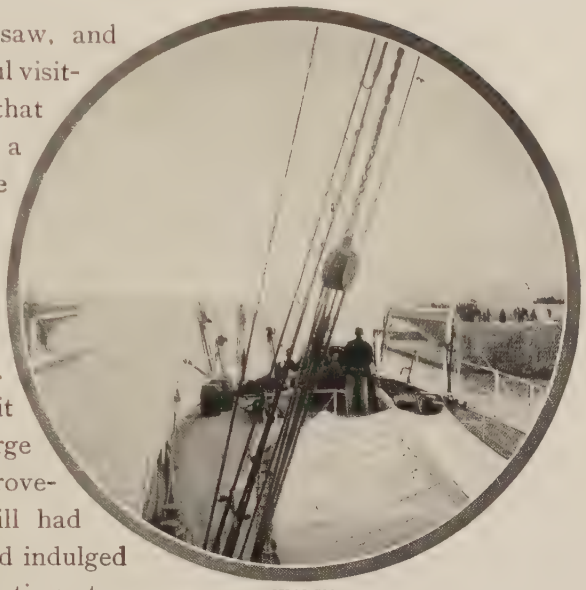


The Wonders of Thessaly

IN APRIL, 1896, Athens offered the world a grander spectacle than had been witnessed in the Levant for many years. It was not a military show, it was not an exposition, nor was it a jubilee. It was rather a celebration of the coming of age of a young nation. In 1896 the world was invited to see young Greece, the petted child of modern diplomacy, born into independence only three quarters of a century before, assume the garb of maturity, and formally accept the responsibilities of a nation that has arrived at its majority—a nation that not only can stand alone, but also is capable of wisely directing its own life-currents.

In honor of this coming of age of the youthful kingdom the immortal Olympian Games were worthily revived. The congratulations and compliments of an admiring and sympathetic world were lavished upon the Athens of 1896. Never were congratulations and compliments more justly bestowed. The Greeks had fulfilled the promises made for them by their sponsors — the European Powers. In the early twenties of the nineteenth century they had waged a just and successful war against the Turk and had gained their independence. They had for a time obeyed King Otho, the Bavarian king chosen for them by foreign diplomats. Under his successor, George the First, they had labored for thirty-three years to remove from their land the marks of Turkish occupation and to bring it forward out of dim medievalism into the broad light of modern civilization. Railways and roads and canals had been planned and executed, a navy and an army had been organized, Athens had been made once more the capital of Hellas, beautiful and prosperous. And these things being done, the world was invited to come, see, and admire the transformation so quickly and so brilliantly achieved.

SUNIUM

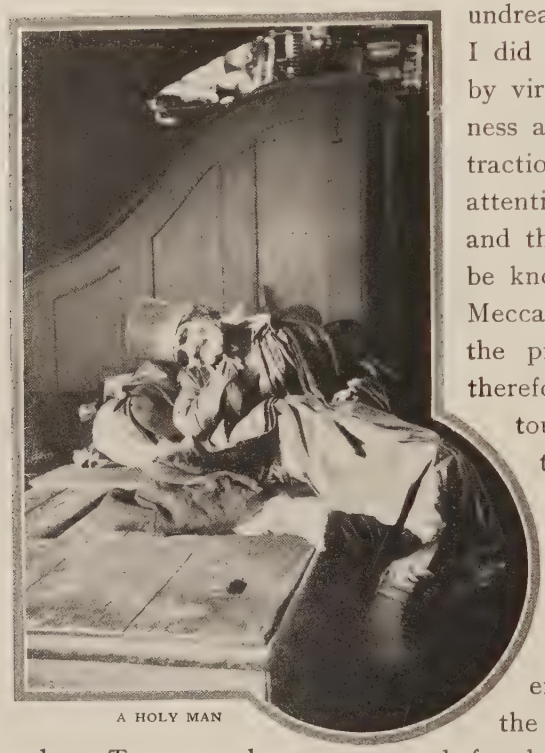


CHALCIS

And the world came, saw, and admired. But thoughtful visitors did not fail to note that beneath the veneer of a forced civilization there were already traces of decay, and of these the most apparent were the black holes of the ever-deepening national debt.

Young Greece had, it is true, purchased a large stock of modern improvements, but alas, the bill had not been paid. She had indulged in speculation, discounting too early her promising future, and giving no thought to the laying of foundations for solid national credit. Hence, there resulted for the people heavy taxation and discontent ; for the government embarrassments and at last bankruptcy. "Something must be done," the nation cried ; and Greece proceeded to do the very thing that she could least afford to do. She picked a quarrel with her old enemy, the Turk, and, urged on by the encouragements of thoughtless friends, declared a war for which she was in no way prepared. The sad result is known — we need not dwell upon it, although we cannot refrain from sorrow at the thought that three quarters of a century of progress and sturdy striving after better things was swallowed up in five weeks of national misfortune. The land of Thessaly was the scene of that brief struggle : Thessaly proved the cemetery of the hopes of Greece.

When in the spring of 1896 I visited that faraway province of King George's realm, I little thought that it would ever occupy so prominent a place in the annals of a then-



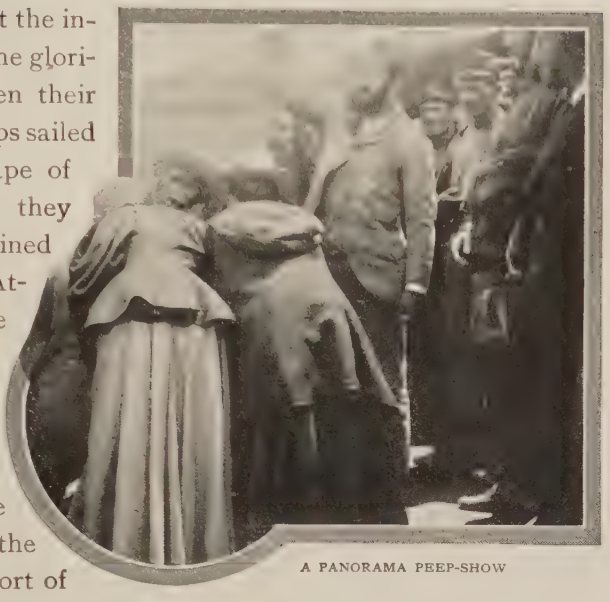
A HOLY MAN

undreamed-of war; but I did feel that Thessaly by virtue of its strangeness and its unique attractions deserved the attention of the traveler, and that it had only to be known to become the Mecca of those who seek the picturesque. It is therefore rather as mere tourists than as historians or diplomats that we set sail from Athens and find ourselves passing by violet-shadowed Salamis, en route for Volo, the chief port of Thessaly. True, we have before looked upon the Bay of Salamis, but it is well for us, before we set foot upon the territory of defeat, to glide for a few hours over these triumphant waves, that for more than two thousand years have been singing the hymn of victory — singing of the deeds of Themistocles and his gallant crews, and laughing quietly the while at the discomfiture of Xerxes and his barbarian host of Persians. A little breath from Salamis, where the old Greeks conquered, will help us to look more kindly on the shortcomings of their sons who in Thessaly failed to renew the glorious traditions of their race.

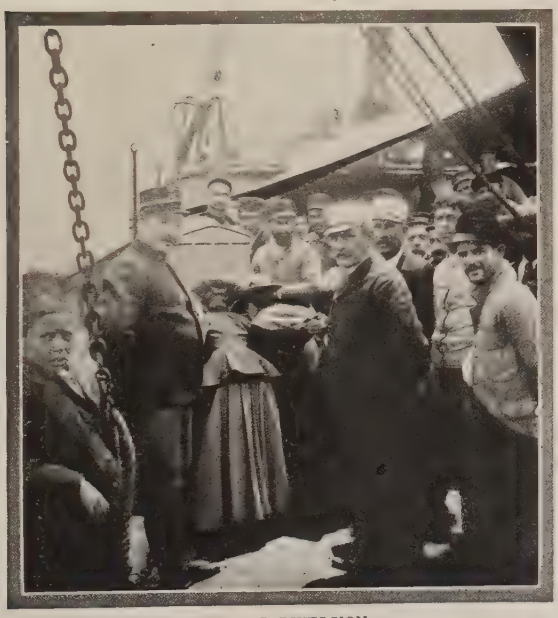
The sailors of Prince George's fleet as they traversed this bay must have felt themselves uplifted by the memory of their immortal forefathers; the soldiers of Prince Constantine

THE PINNACLES OF THE METEORA

must have felt the inspiration of the glorious past, when their transport-ships sailed round the cape of Sunium and they could see outlined against the Attic sky the temple of Athena, the protectress of the land. The complete voyage from the Piræus, the port of Athens, to Volo, the Thessalian port, is an inspiration. The traveler who sails through the Ægean Sea, the Strait of Negropont, the Malic and the Pegasean gulfs, must needs recite a large catalogue of glorious names. He sails from Athens, he sees the unconquered Salamis, looks on Ægina, passes Sunium. Then farther on he will see the immortal mountains that look



A PANORAMA PEEP-SHOW



SHIPBOARD DIVERSION

on Marathon and immortal Marathon itself, that looks upon the sea. By this time he is in the broad canal of Euripus; the Island of Eubœa, the Negropont, is upon his right, the mainland is upon his left,—slowly the two shores come together—Eubœa and Bœotia seem to push their coasts together as if to close the sea-path in the face of the barbarian, and at last the channel narrows to a seething whirlpool, where the tides rush furiously between Greece proper

VOLO

and the largest island of her archipelago. A splendid modern bridge swings aside to let us pass; and this bridge is only the latest successor to that long line of bridges, of which the first, a wooden span, was built four hundred and eleven years before the birth of Christ.

The town of Chalcis guards the strait; beyond it the channel once more widens, and the shores recede so far that we cease to look for ports and places made famous by the ancient Greeks, and turn our attention to the modern Greeks

on board our ship. Among the modern Greeks sailing upon these classic waters I found a brother-lecturer, whose illustrating paraphernalia were as remarkably simple as his theme was vast. He was exploiting what he called the "Cosmopolitan Panorama." Three spectators at a time, paying ten leptha, or about a penny, each, glue their eyes to little peep-holes in the front. They see within a crude, colored lithograph, a representation of a street scene in Vienna. The lecturer, in flowing periods of modern Greek, describes the view, then pulls a string. Vienna vanishes in the flies, and there is revealed a bird's-eye view of New York, with the Bartholdi Statue standing directly beneath and apparently supporting Brooklyn Bridge. New York is jerked away, and Paris is discovered, and so on until we have completed a chromolithographic pilgrimage through the great cities of the world. Eager to encourage a brother professional we, with the reckless generosity of traveling Americans, pay the

A "STATHMOS"

admission fees for the entire ship's company, amounting to a total of about eighty cents, and, for an hour, sailors and passengers succeed one another, three by three, delighted spectators at the little windows of the Cosmopolitan Panorama.

Toward evening we steam into the Malic Gulf where one more undying name rises to our lips, for in the distance we

FIRST-CLASS IN THESSALY

behold the outline of Thermopylæ. But as we are following the troops of Prince Constantine and not the heroic Spartans of Leonidas, we hasten on to Volo. Modern Volo, the Greek base of supplies during the recent war and the chief seaport of Thessaly, lies at the base of ancient Pelion. "But where is Ossa?" exclaims the traveler as he looks on

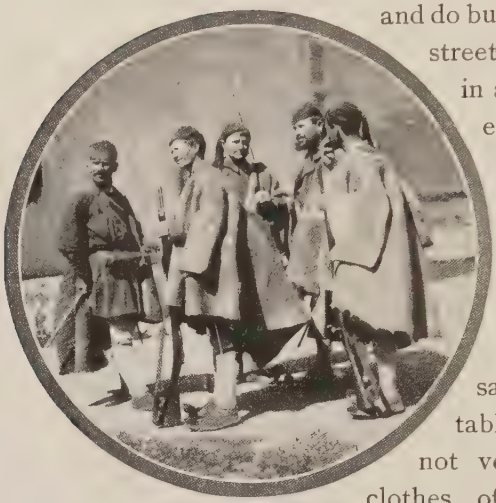
LAUNDRY LADIES

Pelion. Ossa and Pelion have been so often piled on one another in the pages of all literatures that he almost expects to see those world-famous heights performing, like titanic acrobats, some startling feat of equilibrium.

From the slopes of Pelion, medieval villages and the ruins of several ancient towns look down contemptuously on the upstart Volo, a city created since Thessaly was annexed to the Greek kingdom in 1881.

Volo has the aspect of a city that has been planned upon too large, too grand a scale. Of the eighty thousand people expected to flock into the new city, occupy the pretty houses,

SCRAPING ACQUAINTANCE



EVZONOI

and do business in the broad, handsome streets, only eleven thousand put in an appearance. Volo's present population fits very loosely into its too spacious modern shell, and the town offers little of interest to visitors.

Volo is the southern terminus of the new Thessalian railway. In describing Thessaly, the word "new" inevitably recurs; everything that is not very old is very new. The clothes of the inhabitants certainly belong to the first category, and the railways to the last. The existing lines were constructed, so they tell us, not for the convenience of travelers and the shipment of freight, but for the benefit of promoters and contractors. In modern Greek the railway is the "Sidirodromos," the station is the "Stathmos." To learn the hours of departure and arrival we consult the "dromologio." Having bought an "isitirio," we take our places in the first-class "wagoni." Then, being comfortably installed by our dragoman, Charolamos Papadopoulos, who stands sentry at the door of our compartment, we begin our journey northward, crossing on our way the plain of Thessaly.

SHOD WITH TUFTED "TSARUKIA"

GREEK WARRIORS OF TO-DAY

We of course are the objects of considerable curiosity, the news that four "Amerikis" are on board having been given from mouth to mouth and from compartment to compartment. Long stops at unimportant stations give us fine opportunities for studying the people on the platforms and to become acquainted with our fellow-passengers, some of whom are no less picturesque than cordial. The list of station names in the time-table now reads like the report of a war-correspondent; "Volo," "Velestino," "Gherli," "Pharsala," recall panics, skirmishes, and battles; but when in 1896 we heard these names shouted by the guards, they were to us mere sounds and meaningless.

The departure of the train is always announced not by the familiar command, "All aboard!" nor by the French request, "*En voiture, s' il vous plait, Messieurs!*" but by the utterance of a dignified, almost Homeric phrase, "*Oriste, kirii, is tas thesis sas!*" "Pray, gentlemen, get you to your places!" and this is uttered by the guard who is in Greek nothing less than an "epistatis."

We note with interest the foot-gear of the natives. The Greek shoes, or "Tsarukia," are either of a bright yellow or of a gory red with fringy tufts, or pompons, of red wool upon the tips of the pointed turned-up toes. Even the

soldiery wear these gaudy, comfortable shoes. The soldiers seen at various stations belong to the corps of the Greek army that proved itself most effective in the recent war, the Evzonoi. They are for the most part sturdy peasants or mountaineers, and therefore able to endure fatigues and hardships to which the volunteers recruited from the towns and cities so unfortunately succumbed. They wear a uniform modeled after the old national costume, of which the most striking feature is the "fustanella," a skirt of stiff, starched, accordion-plaited linen — to our eyes the most ridiculous garment ever worn by a race of valiant men.

ST. STEPHEN'S MONASTERY CROWNS THE TALLEST ROCK

ALONG THE TURKISH BORDER

THE BRIDGE AT LARISSA

The immaculate Evzonoi of the capital, seen in the streets of Athens, without their pale blue overcoats, looked very much like ballet-girls. We note, however, that as one goes farther and farther from the capital city, the uniform loses its elegance. It would appear as if the government retained the men in Athens, near the royal palace, as long as the embroidered vest, the jaunty fez, and the bright red shoes were fresh and new; then, when the kilts, or fustanellas, begin to lose their spotlessness, and the stiff plaits begin to wilt, the wearers are removed to the remoter quarters of the city—thence to the suburbs, thence to the province, until at last, with stained and torn coats, soiled linen, and unshaven faces, we find them concealing the drooping folds of unwashed fustanellas beneath ragged shepherd's cloaks at some forsaken post in far-off Thessaly.

As I have said, these Evzonoi are the men who bore the brunt of the Turkish onslaughts; whenever genuine fighting

occurred, they were certain to figure valiantly in the front rank. Had the Greek army been composed of men like these, it would have made a better showing, and the Turk, in spite of his overwhelming numbers, would not have found that an invasion of Thessaly meant little more than a military promenade behind a retreating enemy.

One by one the dreary railroad stations are reached, lingered at, and left behind. Thus leisurely we come to Larissa, our destination, distant from Volo only thirty-seven miles. Our first stroll through the streets of Larissa makes evident the fact that foreigners are seldom seen in the chief city of Thessaly. We are followed everywhere by a gaping crowd. When we pause before a shop or sit at a café, all traffic ceases ; everybody stops to take a look at us, to comment upon our appearance, and to discuss the probable reason of our having come to town. I verily believe that during our brief sojourn in Larissa, every one of the fourteen thousand inhabitants enjoyed a prolonged stare at us. The ladies of

THE LEADING HOSTELRY

THE PEOPLE

our party were especially objects of public curiosity, for in Larissa the native women are seldom seen upon the streets.

Until 1881 Larissa was a Turkish city; the life of its Greek residents is still influenced by Moslem customs and traditions.

Although Larissa is the capital of Thessaly, it is extremely provincial. A sea of stupid, staring faces greets the stranger at every turn. The ragged, nondescript, unwashed and unwashable citizens are not even picturesque; they are repulsively miserable, ignorant, and dirty. The existence of a better class in Larissa is not even suggested to the traveler. Prosperity vanished on the day that Thessaly passed into the hands of the Greeks, in 1881, as a result of the treaty of Berlin. The well-to-do Turks departed bag and baggage from these streets. Of Larissa's twenty-seven mosques, all except four are falling to decay. Twenty-three deserted minarets lift their slender, graceful forms above the twenty-three abandoned mosques.

The occupation of Thessaly by a Christian power was the signal for a grand exodus of the Mohammedans. This

A REMINDER OF THE TURK

almost depopulated the country ; and for a time all development was arrested, since the Greeks were slow in coming to take the places left vacant by the Turks. The government made every effort to induce the sober and enduring Turkish peasants to remain. Exemption from military service and many more advantages were offered, but in vain. The Moslem would not stay in a land of which their sultan had been dispossessed. They sold large portions of their goods, and, true to the spirit of their nomad ancestors, figuratively folding their tents, they silently stole away. In a night and a day they were gone, leaving the villages and cities nearly empty.

If those Thessalian Turks of 1881 nourished resentment against the Greeks, to whom the powers of Europe had made a present of their land, how completely that resentment must have been satisfied in 1897! We have all read the story of the Greco-Turkish war in the columns of the daily press, but a brief résumé of the events of that disastrous conflict may help us more clearly to understand just what happened during the five short weeks of hostilities. We remember that in February, 1897, the Greek fleet, commanded by Prince George, and a Greek land-force of four thousand men under Colonel Vassos, were sent to aid the Cretans in their struggle with the Turks. By March, the

"ICEBERGS OF ROCK"

Cretan question had ceased to be a local issue; it had become the concern of the great military powers of Europe. An international fleet then instituted a blockade of Crete, while the cabinets of Europe busied themselves sending notes at one time to the sultan and at another to King George, meantime quarreling with one another as to the policy to be adopted to preserve peace.

Meantime the Greeks, remembering their glorious expulsion of the Turk from Greece in 1822, began to burn with a desire to strike again at their old-time enemy, the power that had held them three centuries in bondage, and that still held in chains numberless lands and cities whose inhabitants are Greek in race, Greek in spirit, and, above all, Greek in religion. Not only Crete, but the islands of the Ægean, the shores of Asia Minor, and the provinces of Epirus and Macedonia, are peopled by Greeks under the domination of the sultan. The spirit of Pan-Hellenism, dormant for a time, was thoroughly awakened by the events in Crete.

A GRECIAN BYWAY

The Greeks of Greece believed their brothers, the so-called "Slave-Greeks" in all the lands just mentioned, ready for revolt. It was thought that King George had only to apply the torch and a great conflagration would break out, consume the flimsy structure of Turkish authority, and expand modern Hellas to the limits already reached by the Hellenic speech and the Hellenic faith. Accordingly King George's government was forced by public clamor to mobilize the army on the plain of Thessaly.

But in June, 1896, the summer before the war, we found on the future Thessalian battle-ground, only the Nomad Vlachs, shepherds of the region. An old chief bids us visit the encampment of his clan. The Vlachs are a Latin-speaking race — Vlach being a term applied in the old days to all people inhabiting the Roman Province at the time of the decline of the last Empire. Even to-day they persist in calling themselves,

OUR DEPARTURE UNDER ESCORT

A VIGOROUS YOUNG BLANCHISSEUSE

"Romani," or Romans. Although these Vlachs of Thessaly are Christians, they are not enthusiastic supporters of the Greek régime because, as they say, while Thessaly was under Turkish rule, taxes were lighter than to-day. The peasantry then had only to satisfy the greed of local functionaries and were left in peace; but as we sit beneath the tent of our kind host, partaking of refreshing "ouso," we learn that when the Greeks assumed control of Thessaly, the burden of taxation was increased alarmingly. The young kingdom of Greece had spent much

for roads and railways, for public buildings and improvements of all kinds, and this in spite of the fact that she was very poor. She was thus forced to levy extortionate assessments on the inhabitants of all her provinces, the new as well as the old. We can readily conceive the ambiguous position into which the Thessalians, whether of Vlach or Hellenic descent, were forced by the change in their nationality and their estate.

THE CAMP OF THE VLACH SHEPHERDS

While proud of becoming free Greeks, they were irritated because they were compelled to pay so dearly for the privilege. Naturally, their Hellenic brothers across the line in Macedonia, and in other Turkish provinces, began to count the cost of liberty and hesitate to take any decisive steps toward overthrowing Turkish domination and realizing that dream of freedom which as a reality might prove a most expensive luxury. In proof of the fact that the Macedonian

THE "SUBURB" OF A MONASTERY

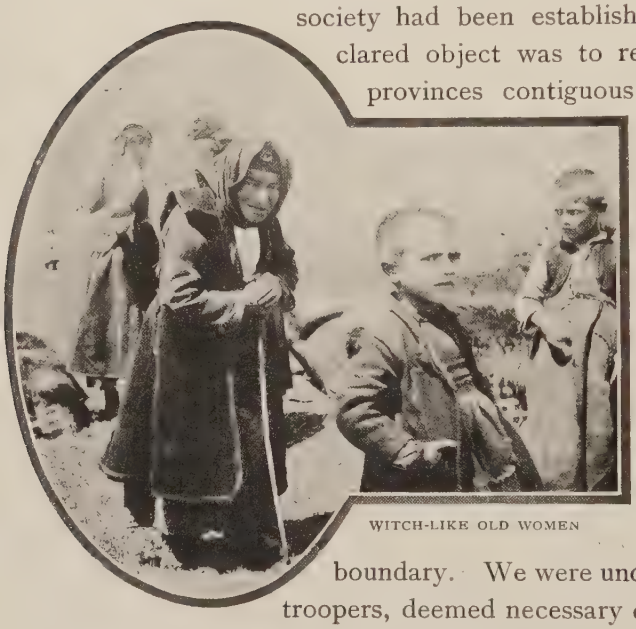
and other Christian subjects of the sultan did *not* desire to exchange a comfortable bondage for a costly freedom, we have only to remember that in spite of the reverses of the Greeks they never stirred a finger to aid Greece in the war she was undertaking ostensibly on their account.

To resume the story of hostilities: While Greece was defying the powers in Crete and massing her troops in Thes-

PATRIARCHAL HOSPITALITY

saly, the press of Europe and America was publishing columns of sympathetic utterances and urging the king and his ministers to maintain their heroic pose. King George found himself powerless to combat the reckless desire for war manifested by his people. Nor must we forget a secret agency that was at work in every corner of King George's realm. This was the National Society — a secret society

composed largely of officers of the Greek army, but including also prominent diplomats and merchants, and many Greeks of note who lived in foreign lands. The National Society made every effort to precipitate the war. It piled the Ossa of Jingoism upon the Pelion of misrepresentation in its reckless endeavor to make for its members an opportunity to distinguish themselves and pose as liberators. This society had been established for two years — its declared object was to recover for Greece the two provinces contiguous to Thessaly — Macedonia and Epirus.



WITCH-LIKE OLD WOMEN

Meantime the Turks had not been idle. By the middle of March no fewer than fifty thousand Turkish soldiers were massed around Ellassona, near the frontier of Thessaly.

In the course of our journey we rode for many miles in sight of the range that marks the Turkish boundary. We were under the escort of three Greek troopers, deemed necessary even in time of peace for protection against the Greek renegade brigands who plunder in their native land and then retire to their dens across the Turkish border. This frontier is more than two hundred miles in length; it follows the water-shed of a low range of mountains, but the passes being on the north side of the line they were held by the Turks. The fortifications were merely small blockhouses — Turkish and Greek blockhouses frequently standing face to face not more than a few hundred yards apart. It was in one of the passes of this frontier range that the first hostilities occurred.

But before we open the chapter of disasters that follows, let me lead you for a few moments into the reposeful solitudes of the beautiful Vale of Tempé.

It was to see this famous gorge that we undertook the long drive by carriage from Larissa, little dreaming that the pictures taken during the excursion would ever serve as illustrations for the story of a campaign in which the Turks should be the victors, and our friends the Greeks the vanquished.

A VLACH MOTHER AND CHILD

The Vale of Tempé lies between Mount Olympus, where the old gods lived, and Ossa, the mountain that was wont to be piled on Pelion. When the invading armies of antiquity rolled in a mighty tide toward Athens, the Vale of Tempé was the natural channel through which the barbarian flood advanced into Thessaly, which was then the granary of

NO CONFIDENCE IN STRANGERS

Greece. But this lovely vale, through which the river Peneus, after traversing the fertile plains, flows eastward to the sea, has witnessed not only invasions but retreats. When Julius Cæsar defeated Pompey and his great army on the field of Pharsalos, it was through the Vale of Tempé that Pompey and his legions fled. Thessaly has long been famous as a battleground. Thrice, in days of old, were the destinies of nations decided by great battles fought upon its level plain — or on the slopes of the mountains that form a rim around about it, like the sides of a great amphitheater.

And as we ride reluctantly away from Tempé, still escorted by our faithful cavalry-men, we will take up again the story of the war. As has been said, the hills on the frontier were the scene of the first encounters between Greeks and Turks. The early skirmishes were informal and unauthorized by either side. First a band of about fifteen hundred irregulars, organized by the secret society, crossed the international line. The Turkish lieutenant, in command

MONASTIC ABODES

GOOD-BY

of the small garrison at the Macedonian blockhouse, protested to the Greek frontier officer that armed men had no right to enter Turkish territory. The Greek replied that it was not his duty to interfere — that the men were not royal troops but an insurgent band composed of brigands, deserters, and foreigners. It is not certain which side fired the first shot. A fight began and lasted until morning; two Turkish blockhouses were burned, and the small garrisons forced into a retreat. The next day the raiders were repulsed with a grave loss of

TWO-THIRDS OF OUR TROOPS

sixty men, and driven back across the border. Two days later there was another raid at another point with similar results.

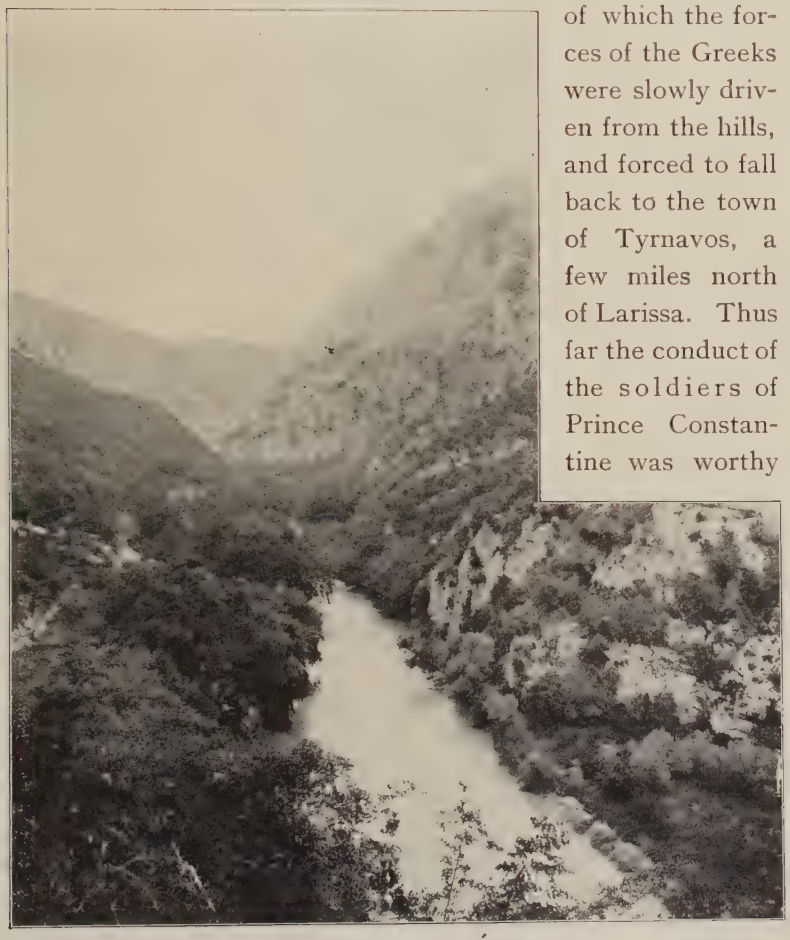
This, however, was not yet war. The government at Athens disclaimed responsibility; both governments professed a desire to maintain peace. But the tension was too great. Two hostile armies were face to face. Five days later the fighting recommenced. This time it was upon the slope of Mount Olympus, the abode of the Greek

MOUNT OSSA

gods. From High Olympus the gods have looked down upon the hand-to-hand strife of armored ancients and upon the long-distance slaughter of cloth-clad sharpshooters; they have heard the clash of antique steel on steel, and they have listened to the modern music of the Mauser. The Greeks engaged in this skirmish were clad in the royal uniform, and commanded by officers for whose actions the government could not refuse to be responsible. It was all over with diplomacy. War was declared by Turkey at

5 p. m. on the 17th of April. It was to be a war full of surprises and disappointments, and a war quickly fought, for it was to last only thirty-three days ; less than five weeks intervened between the declaration on April 17 and the signing of the armistice on the 20th of May.

During the days of April 17 and 18 battle raged in the passes ; the Greek troops fought with valor, but were driven back, and the Turkish forces were left in command of the passes and the crests. Several battles followed, as a result of which the forces of the Greeks were slowly driven from the hills, and forced to fall back to the town of Tyrnavos, a few miles north of Larissa. Thus far the conduct of the soldiers of Prince Constantine was worthy



THE VALE OF TEMPÉ

THE PENEUS

of all praise — the men proved themselves steady fighters in spite of youth and inexperience. And in judging their later actions it must be remembered that the Greeks were at no time as strong numerically as the Turks. Less than seventy thousand untrained Greek troops were pitted against more than one hundred and thirty thousand seasoned veterans or Turkish reserves, drilled by German officers. As yet, however, the Turks had not crossed the line in force, and the Greeks were still strongly intrenched at the entrance to the plain.

But a fatal mistake during the night of April 23 completely changed the situation. The advance posts of the Greeks were signaled to retire to the main line. The signals were wrongly interpreted in Tyrnavos, whence the rumor ran that the advance posts have been taken by the Turks. The inhabitants packed up goods and chattels, and began to

"AN ISLAND IN MID-AIR"

leave the town. Panic seized the troops and spread from Tyrnavos to Larissa and thence southward to the very bases of supplies, to Volo and the other seaport cities.

Larissa was abandoned by the Greek forces, and for three days was at the mercy of the released convicts and drunken insurgents, who pillaged the houses, committed all kinds of outrage, and then fought among themselves.

When the Turkish cavalry at last arrived, they came in the guise of deliverers, and were welcomed by the four hundred Moslem inhabitants, the Jews, and the few Greek residents remaining in the city. The Turkish commander, when complimented on his capture of the city, replied: "Mere

TOURING IN WONDER-LAND

A FLIGHT INTO GREECE

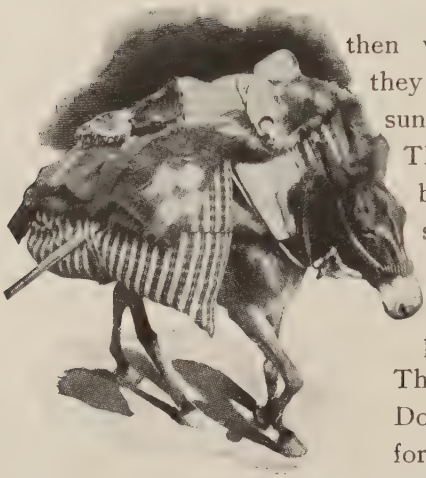
luck. We happened to be coming along and walked into town. There was no fighting ; they ran away ; we were in the right place,— that is all."

The stampede of the Greeks was indeed inexplicable. The Turks followed in stolid bewilderment and found themselves almost without an effort in possession of the city that had been formerly the Turkish capital of Thessaly.

The Greek army under the orders of the much-criticized Crown Prince fell back to Pharsala in confusion. The new line of defense was about thirty miles farther south. The principal strong points were near the towns of Pharsala and Velestino. The Turks after a delay of several days leisurely

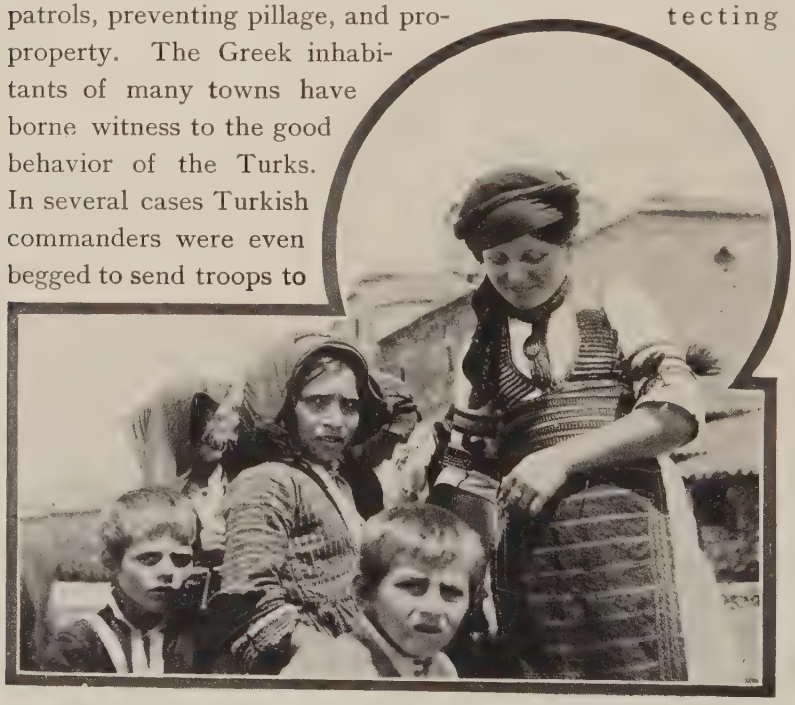
followed. At Velestino they met with a sharp check, which was, however, only an incident, proving that the Greeks were still capable of showing courage and that in spite of the caution of the Turkish commander occasional indiscretions were committed by his inferior officers. But the Turks continued to advance southward, seeming to have as little thought of danger as the children we saw playing near the villages we passed. Whenever the Turks advanced in force, the Greeks, although holding positions that could not have been taken without terrible loss of life, melted away. They abandoned splendid lines of defense, and fell back still farther toward the south to take up other positions which in time were to be relinquished after a feeble defense, or possibly, without a struggle. They did not even cripple the railway and they almost invariably left telegraph-wires uncut. At Larissa, Pharsala, and Domokos they abandoned large supplies of rifles and ammunition instead of destroying them. At Velestino they dragged big cannon to the hill-tops, kept them there silent during a two-days' battle, and

VLACHS EN VOYAGE



BABIES AND BAGGAGE

then without firing a single charge they dragged them down again and sunk them in the Gulf of Volo. They never stopped to blow up bridges or to burn them or to spike their guns. Thus in disorder they retreated from the northern frontier, across the plain, to the southern border of Thessaly, and finally, the battle of Domokos having been disastrous for them, their forces embarked hastily at Volo and other ports or retreated in disorder through the pass of Thermopylæ. The Turks immediately seized all the important towns, establishing patrols, preventing pillage, and protecting property. The Greek inhabitants of many towns have borne witness to the good behavior of the Turks. In several cases Turkish commanders were even begged to send troops to



THESSALIAN TYPES

FINE OLD GENTLEMEN

act as police and to protect the villages from the rapacity of Greek irregulars and deserters from the retreating army.

The triumph of Turkey was complete. One month from the day on which the Greek regulars opened hostilities near the Vale of Tempé, on the north border, the last Greek soldier crossed the Furka Pass on the southern frontier and

A FOUNTAIN

left Thessaly in the possession of the Ottoman troops. That night the battalions of the demoralized Greek army slept in the narrow defiles of Thermopylæ. The next day the armistice was signed by the two governments, ending the short, inglorious war.

MIDDAY REPOSE

But the Greek navy, you may ask, what was it doing all this time? What of Prince George and his fleet of warships? He could do nothing. The Greek fleet was paralyzed by the fact that on the Turkish coasts it would have found no cities to attack that were not inhabited by Greeks; that it would have been forced to destroy a vast amount of property belonging to Greek merchants and Greek residents before it could inflict a telling blow upon its enemy the Turks.

And what of the Athenian populace which had been so eager for the fray? It was content to sit in its cafés and openly criticize the conduct of the campaign. What also of the Greeks living in foreign lands? They at least did everything in their power to aid the

A HAPPY FAMILY

fatherland. Averoff, the Alexandrian millionaire, who restored the Stadium in which the Olympian Games had been celebrated, secured six million dollars for the Greek war-fund, and presented the army with forty thousand uniforms. Greeks from all lands came flocking to Athens to enlist, but they were unarmed, untrained, and unprepared for service; and many of them arrived too late to be of use. The five hundred Greek volunteers from the United States arrived in their native country just twenty-four hours after the armistice had been signed.

THE GATE OF THESSALY

Such were the events that in 1897 turned the attention of the world to Thessaly. We, however, were attracted to the land by the fame of its wonders, the "Meteora" or the "Monasteries in the Air."

They are accessible from the village of Kalabaka, the northern terminus of the Thessalian Railway. The rocky heights that rise above the village may be likened to the extremity of a mighty glacier of gray conglomerate that has its source amid the snows of High Olympus, in the east, flows westward in a broadening flood until it breaks and

melts into the plain of Thessaly. Green, fertile waves caress the cold gray cliffs, or break against the walls of the rock glacier ; hamlets and villages, like fleets of little fishing-boats are lifted by the verdant tide and seem to pause a moment near the ragged coast, before the reflux draws them down again. Two or three daring little craft have ventured even into the yawning fissures or steep-walled inlets, hollowed by the beating sea. The wonder is that all is immobile, for the evidences of wave-action are so insistent that we expect to see the flood hurled back by the imposing

'TWEEN TEMPÉ'S WALLS

THE ABBOT OF HAGIA TRIADA

cliffs, or else that the cliffs will yield to repeated attacks, and like the gigantic icebergs to which Alaska glaciers give birth, separate themselves from the parent mass, wrench themselves free, and fall like broken mountains into the laughing waves of green. Fantastic imaginings you may say; a few moments later, as we draw nearer, the possibility of a reali-

IN THE VALE

zation of this fantastic suggestion is revealed to us with such convincing force that we involuntarily shrink back in startled expectation that our dreams may come true.

The birth of the iceberg of solid rock seems imminent. The pillar-like masses appear as if about to topple over and crash down upon us.

The traveler who tells of the Meteora must ask for credulous ears, for his tale will test your confidence in his veracity. Who, gazing at these towering monoliths, would believe that almost every one is crowned by an extensive monastery, a

decaying stronghold of Orthodox monasticism? Yet we are to sleep three nights in the odor of sanctity on the summit of the tallest of the Meteora rocks up there in the right hand corner of the sky as framed by limits of the illustration. We choose St. Stephens as the most accessible of the four inhabited convents found on the skyward tips of those titanic arrow-heads. There are besides a score of deserted structures perched on other peaks, wedged in the fissures or clinging to the walls.

"Seeing is believing," you may say, and I reply by pointing to the pictures of these impossible sites. Never am I more fully conscious of the debt I owe to that most faithful of recording secretaries, the camera, than when I attempt to describe what we saw in the three days of our sojourn in this enchanted region.

SCHOOLBOYS OF KALABAKA

St. Stephens stands, as it were, on an island in mid air, but the island lies close to the extremity of a long peninsula, and a narrow bridge, spanning a deep channel of space, links the island to the mountain mainland. Viewed from the heights behind the monastery, its spacious buildings, so securely seated on broad foundations, no longer appear to us like an eagle's nest on the apex of a slender pinnacle of rock. The aspect of the monasteries depends entirely upon the point of view. Most startling changes of outline result at almost every step. What seemed to tower high above us, is seen a moment later at our feet; a tapering minaret of rock, viewed from another standpoint, becomes a wide flat-topped cliff; pinnacles change to palisades, sheer walls to gentle slopes — as if this region were the creation of some scenic trickster, the stage-setting for some magical pantomime.

Crossing the little bridge, we shout lustily for entrance; the door is slowly opened, there is a brief parley, and a few

moments later, we find ourselves within the monastery court. The buildings seem almost deserted; two or three Greek monks make us welcome in the name of the Higoumenos, or abbot. Our dragoman, familiar with the place, thanks to earlier visits, then installs us in the best suite of rooms, while our cook assumes high-handed sway in the smoky kitchen.

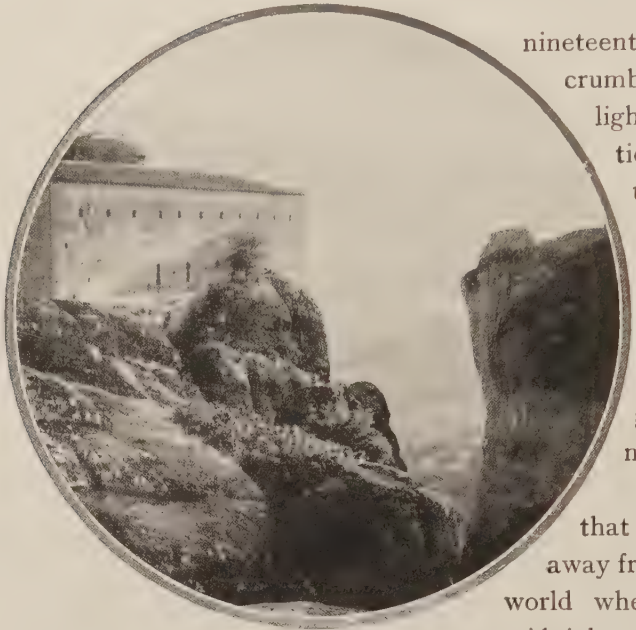
THE MONASTERY OF ST. STEPHEN

We find that of the many cells that line St. Stephen's corridors, only seven are occupied; the present occupants being probably the last, for when they shall have passed away, there is no hope that others will come in to take their places. The destiny of the Meteora monasteries is to become national curiosities, monuments preserved by the government as a temptation for the tourist. In fact, the monasteries to-day are little else, but so few have been the travelers who have discovered these high-perched haunts, that their medieval atmosphere has not yet been disturbed.

THE HOLY TRINITY MONASTERY

The monks, apparently, are very poor, too poor, at least, to afford the luxury of cleanliness. The Higoumenos, a man far more intelligent than the simple-minded brothers, seems to realize that the end is near, that this remnant of the Middle Ages which, thanks to its inaccessible refuge on the Meteora peaks, has persisted through the end of the

WHERE WE LODGED



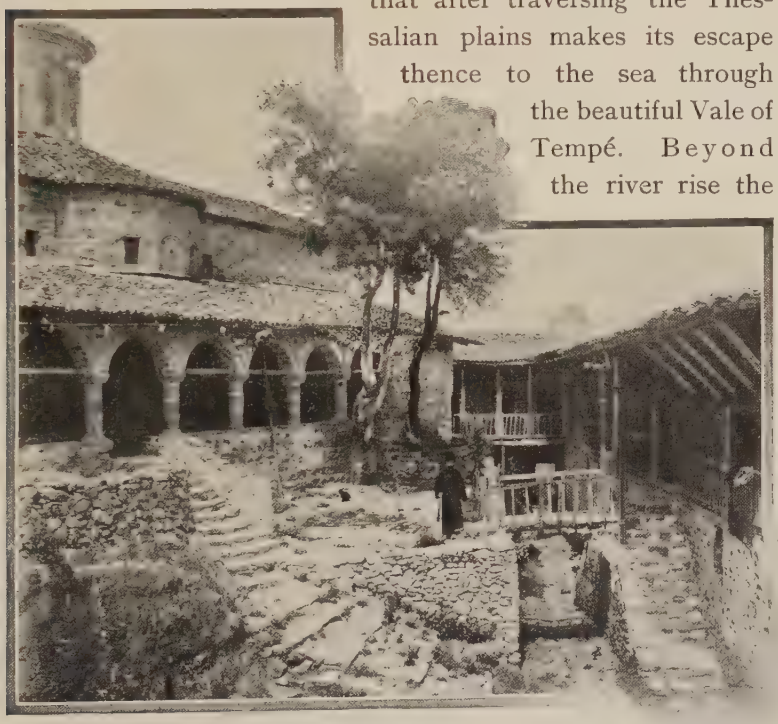
A DEEP CHANNEL OF SPACE

nineteenth century, must crumble away as the light of the twentieth century falls upon it, just as the corpses of the Mycenæn kings crumble to dust when exposed to the gaze of modern men.

We felt indeed that we were far away from the modern world when, during the midnight services, we sat in the dim corners of the little Byzantine chapel, about two thousand feet above the plains of Thessaly, and listened to the monotonous and meaningless chanting of the black-robed, bearded priests, and watched them make repeatedly that rapid gesture that outlines the cross, by touching the head, the body, the right breast, then the left — or falling to their knees, rising and dropping down again, as the Greek ritual demanded. The flickering candlelight, the faint glimmer of silver lamps hanging before the golden icons, the uncomprehended chant, the long black shadows that swayed mysteriously on roof or walls, where they were confounded with frescoed saints, — all these things conspire to remove us from to-day's world, and produce an impression of medievalism and of a remoteness that is both of time and of space.

Our home-life in the monastery was as delightful as our surroundings were unique and strange. We were served by the indispensable Papadopoulos, who by his ministrations

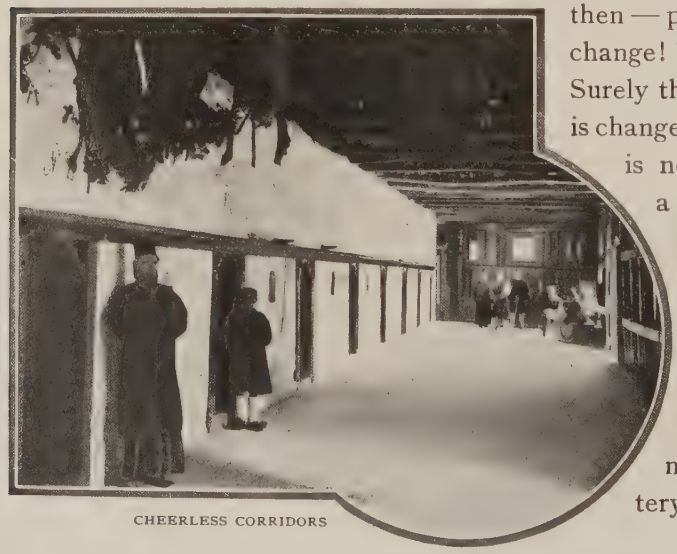
smoothed out the roughness of the accommodations as skilfully as Gregorio our cook shielded us from the horrors of the Greek cuisine. A little neophyte, the only one St. Stephen's now possesses, a boy too poor even to buy the garb of his class, is appointed by the Abbot to minister to us in the name of the church; but I fear that we were more impressed by the size of his red shoes than by the fact that he stood in them as the representative of the Orthodox faith. On the wall hung pictures of the King and Queen; the window commanded a view full of variety and wonder. Below is the village of Kalabaka, beyond it fields and vineyards, formerly belonging to the monks; then comes a band of silver, the river familiar to the readers of ancient history as the Peneus — to-day the Salamvrias. It is the same stream that after traversing the Thessalian plains makes its escape thence to the sea through the beautiful Vale of Tempé. Beyond the river rise the



IN THE COURTYARD

Pindus Mountains, the highest peak almost eight thousand feet above the sea. Beyond this range of mountains lies the province of Epirus, the inhabitants of which are Greeks but which is ruled by the Turkish sultan.

Nearer on our right are grouped the Meteora columns, crowned by the neighboring monasteries, in situations far more startling than that of the one that has so hospitably received us. To reach the nearest of them, the "Hagia Triada," or Holy Trinity, seems at first a very simple matter. A path apparently leads from the bridge of St. Stephens' directly to the other holy habitat. We can easily trace the route we are to follow—a simple promenade will bring us in three or four minutes to our destination. We forget the scenic surprises and deceptions of the day before. The conjurer who controls this wonderland is not asleep; he is preparing a more marvelous feat of magic than any he has yet performed; and he intends to enhance the effect of his illusion by adding to it that indispensable ingredient of the successful trick—surprise. He waits until we reach the point where we think that the path turns sharply to the right, then—presto! change! begone! Surely the scene is changed; there is no path; a gulf has opened at our feet, across which are the monastery of the



CHEERLESS CORRIDORS

ANOTHER ASPECT OF HAGIA TRIADA

A CELL

Holy Trinity and about two acres of its surrounding land drifting off into space. From the brink of an unsuspected abyss we gaze speechless with amazement at the unattainable monastery, throned on its pillar of rock, isolated, mysterious, impossible.

Then mounting our mules we wind down a steep, rough trail, halting several times to enjoy the striking views of Hagia Triada, as they are one by one revealed. We cannot explain to ourselves how we could ever have mistaken yonder sky-island for a part of the mainland. We are almost ready to believe that these rocks, like the cliffs in a spectacular stage production, are mounted on rollers and capable of being moved about at will.

At last we find ourselves at the base of a pyramid of rock that rises between the column of Hagia Triada and the cliff. Gazing up, we discover a projecting platform whence a rope is dangling,—a rope that we have come

many miles to see; for it is the rope by means of which visitors are hoisted from the bottom of the cliff to the monastery "landing-stage" there on high. A moment later the rope tautens, and a huge bundle of firewood goes swinging aloft; for this Meteora "elevator" is used for freight as well as passengers. Impatiently we wait our turn, but alas! in answer to our shouts, the monks above toss down in harsh phrases the disappointing information that passenger traffic is for the present interrupted because of the age and insecurity of the famous rope. They firmly refuse to take the risk of lifting human weights, but cordially invite us to walk upstairs to their aerial sanctuary. Stairs there are; we had not noticed them at first,— a flight

ONE OF SEVEN MONKS

of rickety wooden steps, steep as a ladder, leading to a narrow ledge fifty feet above. The ledge runs upward to the right, then ends abruptly; above it rises to meet the sky a sheer smooth wall of solid rock.

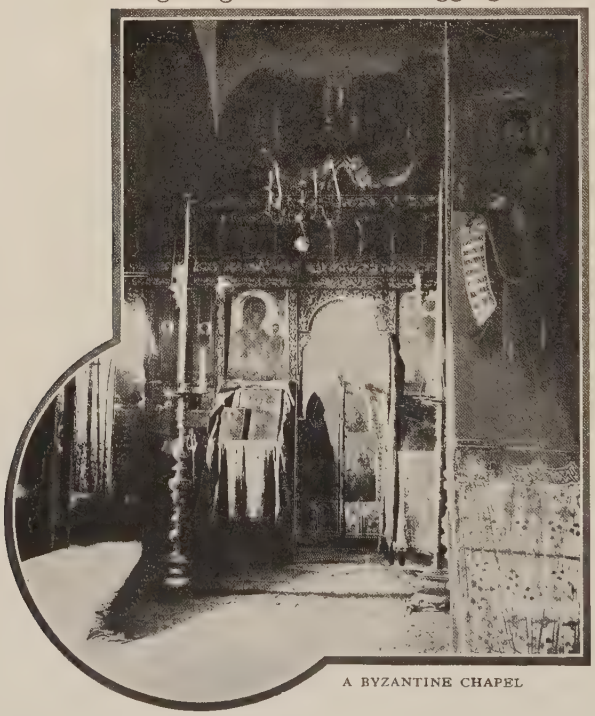
COMFORTLESS QUARTERS

We hesitate before we begin this steep ascent, but when Papadopculos tells us that it is the only isolated monastery to which women will be admitted, the courageous ladies of our party resolve to reach the top at any cost, and we of course must needs follow. Accordingly we walk up-stairs and find ourselves upon the narrow ledge, where the overhanging rocks force us to advance sideways, bracing ourselves against a flimsy barrier without which, however, a promenade like this would not be possible for those whose heads grow dizzy. The Pindus Mountains and the River Peneus form the background of our view; the plain is far below, the villages too near the bases of the cliffs to be discernible from here.

Advancing slowly, the barrier creaking with old age and weakness every time we put our hands upon it, we reach the upper end of the steeply ascending ledge. Here, as I have said, the path vanishes. But a little ladder leads to the left into a deep chimney-like fissure in the rock. The rest of the ascent is made in almost utter darkness, and

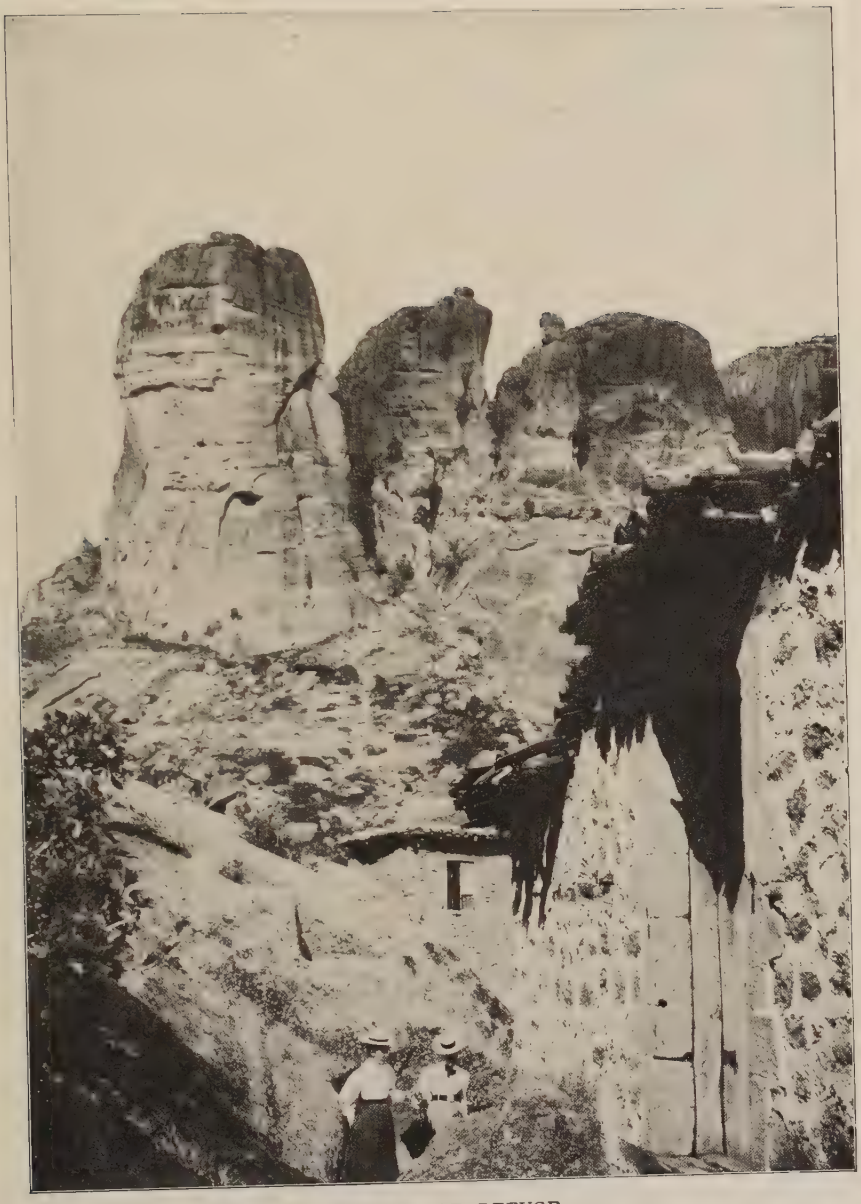
therefore the most difficult portion of the climb cannot be illustrated. Mounting that little ladder, one of the ladies disappears through an iron trap-door and finds herself at the bottom of a natural fissure, triangular, with two sides of rock, while the third is of boards, shutting out the light and concealing the vertiginous vistas, and thereby making the ascent less terrifying to the timid.

Through another trap-door at the top of this well-like hole, a monk peers down upon the would-be visitor and bids her climb to him, up a shaky, swaying ladder — not a rope-ladder, but a rough wooden ladder made up of numberless short sections, hinged together in a manner obviously insecure. So close is the ladder to the walls that a firm foothold is impossible, and the creaking and the swaying of it as the daring pilgrim climbs would disconcert a sailor accustomed to fighting storms in the rigging of a ship. But the words, "Oh, I 'm all right!" are dropped reassuringly, until at last the creaking ceases, and we know that she is safe and sound above. One by one we follow, not disdaining the rope, which, lowered to us by the thoughtful monks, we tie around the waist.



A BYZANTINE CHAPEL

And thus it was that the American pilgrims arrived at the Convent of the Holy Trinity. A final short climb to the monas-



TOWERS OF REFUGE

tery proper now ensues, and soon we are being entertained by the Higoumenos, who regales us with preserved fruits, pure native wine, and the Thessalian substitute for the Athenian's favorite mastica, a very similar white distillation known as "ouso." We visit the chapel and make the customary and expected offerings. Then we inspect the crude hoisting-machinery in the "elevator" tower and congratulate ourselves that we are not compelled to trust to it for the descent. The Abbot then takes us for a stroll in his two-acre garden on the summit, where with a smile he tells us that the annual crop of rocks is the only certain one. Then in a tone of resignation he adds that his convent has but five

WHERE MIDNIGHT PRAYERS ARE SAID

OUR REFECTORY

inmates; although it once had ten times that number. Greek monks, like those of the Catholic faith, are pledged to celibacy, but this is not true of the Orthodox priests. Greek priests who are not monks or bishops may lawfully marry, but when one of them is raised to the rank of bishop, he must put away his wife, who usually enters a convent and becomes a nun. Our visit finished, the Higoumenos accompanies us down to the village, and as we pick our way around the base of the huge rock-column on which his monastery stands, he details some of the tenets of the Greek orthodox religion. First, the Greek church does not recognize the Pope of Rome as the supreme head of the spiritual

world. It will not admit the power of direct absolution. Confession is made only to selected elders, more in the form of confidential conversation. It rejects the doctrine of purgatory. It administers bread dipped in wine and water, instead of bread alone, and, the last and most apparent distinction, it prohibits the use of images or statues as religious symbols, lest in the minds of the ignorant they be received as idols. But this distinction does not prevent the icons or sacred pictures from becoming the objects of much devotion, the people kissing them with eager reverence and often with tearful passion. Still discussing Greek orthodoxy, we presently find ourselves in the village streets whence our party observes that the pinnacle of the Holy Trinity convent appears in still another and startlingly different aspect.

Before parting from the holy man we ask the three questions that must inevitably arise in the mind of every traveler, who sees the Meteora. When were these monasteries founded? How did the first monks reach those summits? Why did they elect to dwell in the midst of this rocky desolation? Vaguely runs the story that in the fourteenth century, Greek hermits in seeking solitude came hither to dwell in the little

AN ICON

caves near the bases of the cliffs. Nature there provided habitations; the holy men, in some way, scrambled up, closed the cave entrances with wooden walls, and constructed crude, jointed ladders which gave access to their lofty retreats, or at will could be drawn up, to insure complete isolation.

But in those days hermit-hunting was a fashionable pursuit; the poor saints found that they were as much hated

THE PENEUS AND PINDUS RANGE

and maltreated by the warlike lords of the province, as they were respected and kindly treated by the superstitious peasantry. Their caves were too well within the reach of their persecutors, among whom the Turks were to be numbered a few generations later. The pressing need of greater security drove them slowly skyward; from cave to cave they ascended, ever spreading the network of swinging wooden ladders The

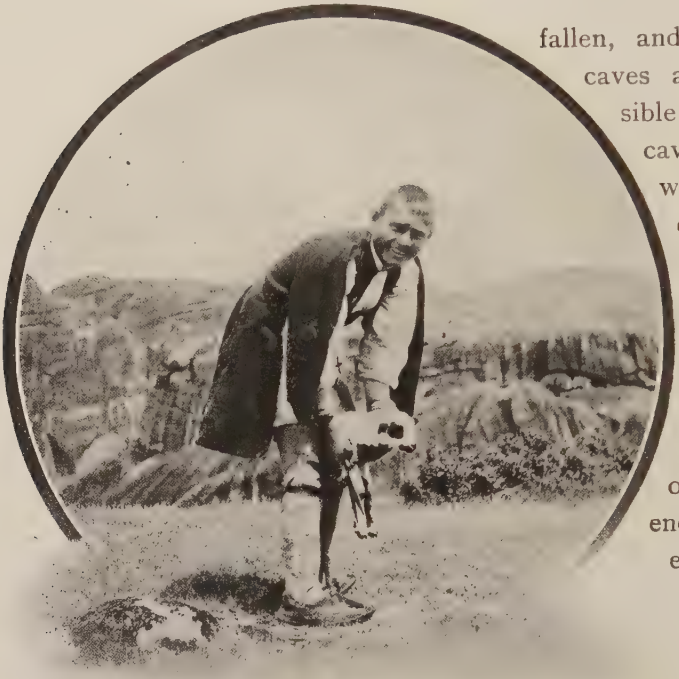
DESERTED DWELLINGS

sense of a common danger created a feeling of brotherhood. Gradually fraternities were formed. The hermits ceased to be hermits and became monks. Later the growing religious enthusiasm of the age transformed these hunted beings into protégés of the Byzantine princes. Even the emperors of Christian Constantinople loved to pose as patrons of these Thessalian monks. The upward progress of the

TRAVELING

brotherhoods in importance and power was coincident with that physical elevation of themselves and their romantic structures. The monks reached the zenith of their wealth and influence simultaneously with the arrival of their monasteries on the very highest altitudes attainable on the Meteora summits.

The primitive cliff-dwellings are now and long have been deserted; the ladders have decayed, sections of them have



A PEASANT AND HIS PET

fallen, and the upper caves are inaccessible. Modest cave-dwellings were innumerable, and at one time there were as many as twenty-four monasteries, each one lavishly endowed and enthroned on an isolated crag.

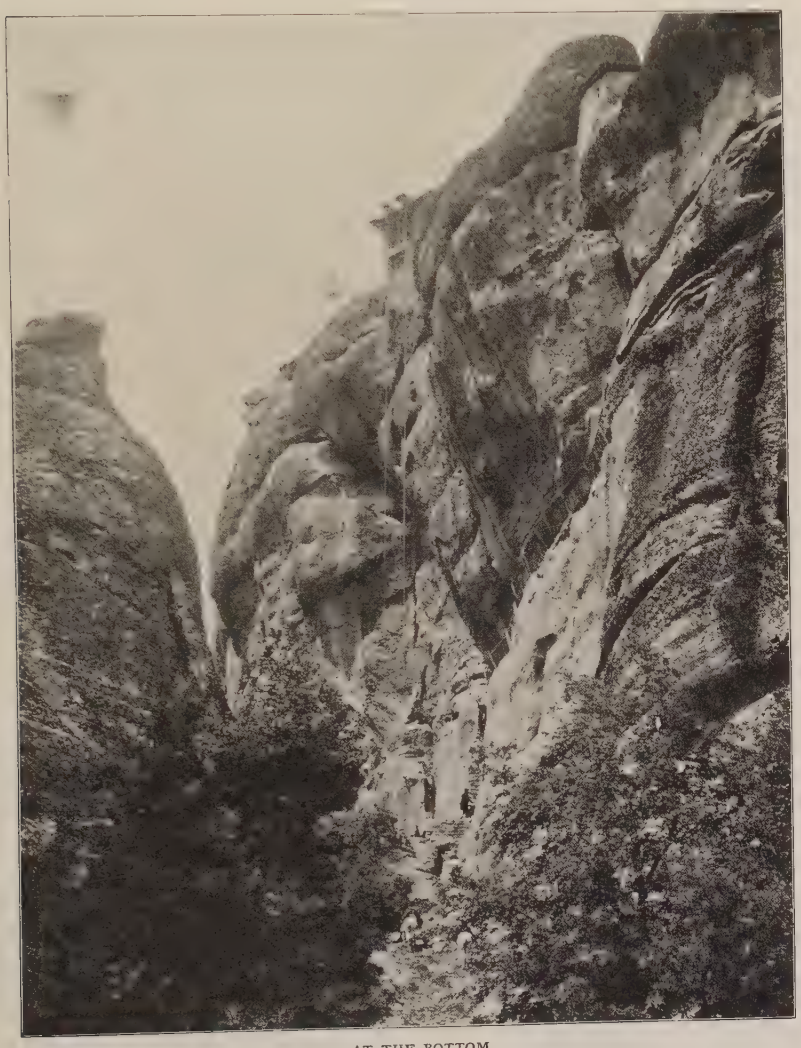
The geological formation favored the plans of those early seekers after solitude. The cliffs are composed of gray and yellow conglomerate and of limestone. The ages have been silently at work carving this soft material into all sorts of fantastic forms and in hollowing recesses.

The waters of the great lake that once filled the basin that now is Thessaly, began the work; rivers constantly decreasing in volume continued it; the rains and torrents then achieved the delicate detail, and the winds have added to these sculptured mountains the polish of their passing, and as a result of all this erosion by water, wind, and weather, cliff has been separated from cliff, gulfs deep as mountains have been opened, pillars and columns and pinnacles have been formed until we are tempted to believe the

LEANING TOWERS OF THESSALY

monkish legend, which tells that God in his mercy purposely created this unique and forbidding solitude as a refuge in the days of peril and persecution for the holy men whose only wish was to serve and worship Him in peace.

We halted in the course of our wandering through this sacred, half-forgotten realm, below one monastery, strangely



AT THE BOTTOM

unlike the rest. It was half cave, half balcony, and utterly abandoned. No voice replied to our salute; no ladder was lowered in hospitable intent. We merely looked and mused and recommenced our pilgrimage. Another hour's journeying on muleback and on foot, brings us beneath the shadow of an awful mass of rock, roofed by the rambling buildings of

ON THE STAIRS

a larger monastery that takes its name from its patron saint, Hagios Barlaam. High to the left we see the tower from which the hoisting ropes descend; lower and more to the right is a little building, from the door of which another of those long ladders composed of shaky sections has been flung into space. Although it is high-noon, the depths

between the cliffs are shadowy and dim; in a sort of midday twilight we approach the base of the cliff, and there our guide, aided by the mule-boys, prepares to serve a picnic luncheon. We have a well-filled basket, but no fresh water has been brought; accordingly Papadopoulos assembles the Keratzes, and orders them to shout in chorus, and thus make

ON THE LEDGE

known our wants to the monks on high. The gorge re-echoes to their thirsty yells. They shout the more lustily, because if we do not get water, they will have less wine to drink, and Thessalian mule-boys or Keratzes are very fond of the strong resined wines of Greece. Meantime we spread our feast on a white cloth on the ground. Presently we are

answered by some one in the sky. A voice comes down to us like the cry of a soaring bird, and a few moments later the voice is followed by the descent of a primitive dumb-waiter, the contents of which are more eloquent than words. In addition to a pail of fresh cool water, we find in that tin

ON THE LADDER

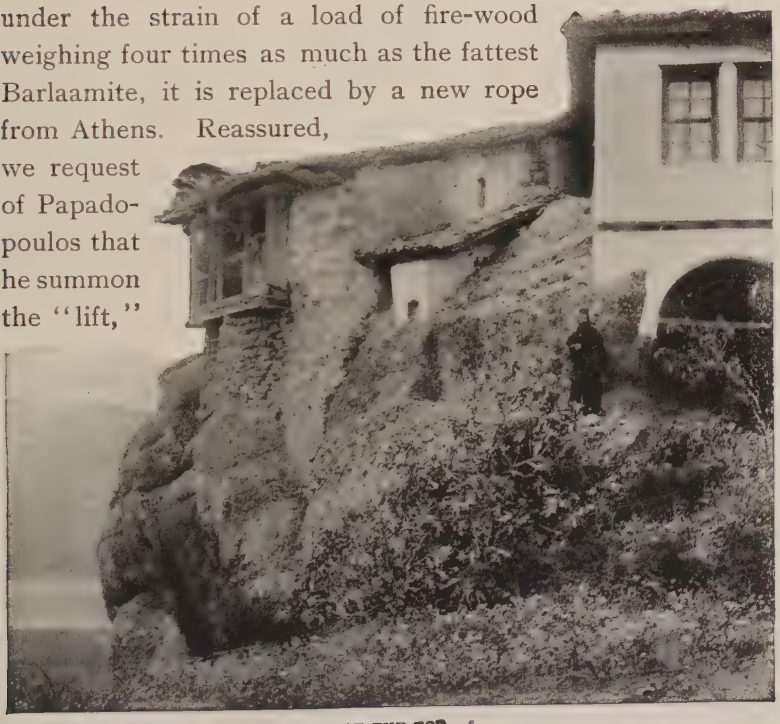
receptacle, so generously lowered, a bottle of old monastery wine and some substantial bread.

Our vocal battery is ordered to project our thanks on high, and a broadside of Greek gratitude thunders against the cliff, rebounds from wall to wall, until, more or less shattered by contact with the rocks, it strikes the ears of our kind hosts above. While we discuss cold viands, our dragoman assures

THE START

A SHEPHERD

us that the ascent to Hagios Barlaam may be made by the traditional rope; that here at last we may enjoy the hair-raising experience of being hoisted in a net up to a monkish eyrie. To climb the ladders, the skill and courage of a trapeze artist are required, but the ascent by rope is simple, safe, and feasible. The rope he assures us is tested frequently; if it breaks under the strain of a load of fire-wood weighing four times as much as the fattest Barlaamite, it is replaced by a new rope from Athens. Reassured, we request of Papadopoulos that he summon the "lift,"



AT THE TOP

and again the lungs of our attendants wake the echoes; this time with a demand that the Meteora elevator be sent down. A moment later what appears to be a gigantic spider slowly lowers itself by a single filature; it is an empty net hooked to the end of a two-inch rope that is being paid out by the monks above. At last it dangles within reach. Our men, seizing the net, spread it on the ground, lay a small rug in the middle of it, and beg the two passengers to seat themselves upon the rug. Two disappointed women, barred from the trip, by a monastic rule, watch us with much envy as the guides gather up

LIKE A CAMEL KNEELING

THE CAVES IN THE CLIFF

the edges of the net, assemble them above our heads, and pass the loops over the big iron hook that dangles at the rope's end, like an inverted interrogation point, marking the all-absorbing question, "What if the rope should break?"

Oh, the creepy feeling of that moment of departure! First, the net about us tightens, our knees are pressed in and up, our elbows firmly pinned to our sides, then our two

heads are forced together with a crack, then our bodies begin to sag, and mine sags more than the other fellow's. The pressure of the earth has ceased; there comes a sense of lightness, of cramped airiness; then we begin to turn, round and round, slowly at first, then faster, then we sway to and fro. The earth drops gradually away; the voices of our

HOMES OF HERMITS

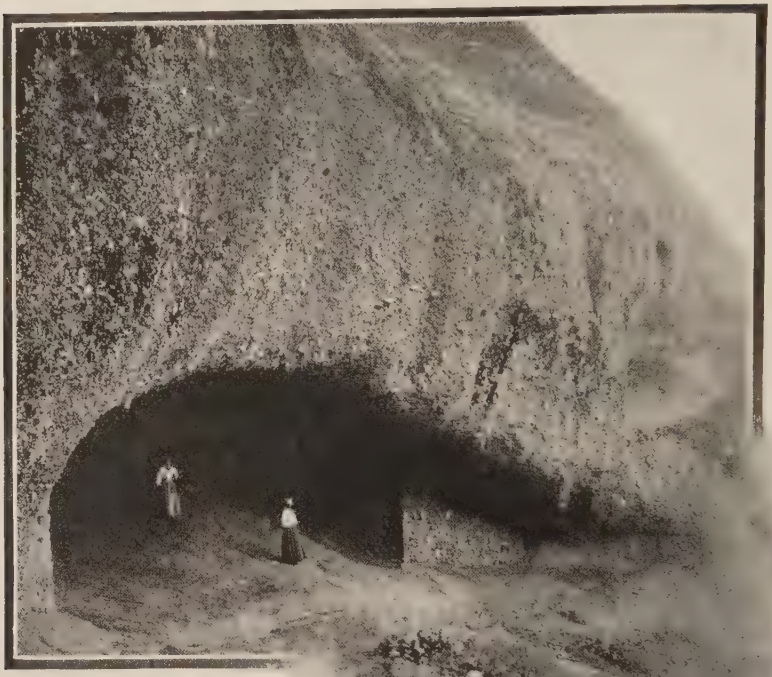
friends grow fainter; and at this point we close our eyes. When we re-open them, we experience a peculiar illusion. We are stationary; the rocky walls are sliding slowly downward, like a background in a transformation scene. Then the cliffs begin to sway. One mass of rock, fifty feet away, advances threateningly, until we can nearly touch its rough

LOOKING DOWN AT THE ASCENDING NET

surface, then it falls back again. We cannot believe that we are going up; the world instead is going down and down and down, and the cliffs are dancing round about us like storm-clouds in the arms of the wind. The only movement of which we are conscious is a gentle elastic jerking, as we go bobbing, turning, swinging skyward. The rope above is

THE AGES HAVE BEEN AT WORK

undulating like a long yellow snake but looks no shorter than it did before we started. The ascent is interminably slow—minutes that seem like hours pass before we reach the level of the foundations of the tower. We can almost count the strata of masonry, as jerk by jerk, our net is lifted. We feel like miserable fish, and never have fish been farther out of



A YAWNING MOUNTAIN

water. It costs an effort to look up or down, so tightly are we pinioned by the meshes of the encircling net.

Below, to the right, we see the upper end of the chain of ladders disappearing through a little door. As we mount, the meshes of the net are drawn tighter and tighter at every revolution. Now and then, as the net adjusts itself to some new strain, the knots slip suddenly, and the slipping of every knot gives us a tremor of horrified expectancy. Finally we begin to hear the creaking of a windlass, and the unsteady tread of the old monks, who in the tower there above are resignedly circling round and round, pushing long poles fixed to a crude sort of winch, every revolution of which brings us

nearer to the landing-place. Let them but withdraw their poles, release the windlass — we can see it spin like a big top — a hundred of revolutions to the second, and we can imagine the downward flight of the net with its human contents. Verily we shall not neglect the admonition of our guide to drop a generous contribution into the coffers of the

GULFS DEEP AS MOUNTAINS ARE HIGH

church! The thought that these same monks are to control the machinery during our descent, predisposes us to make liberal donations.

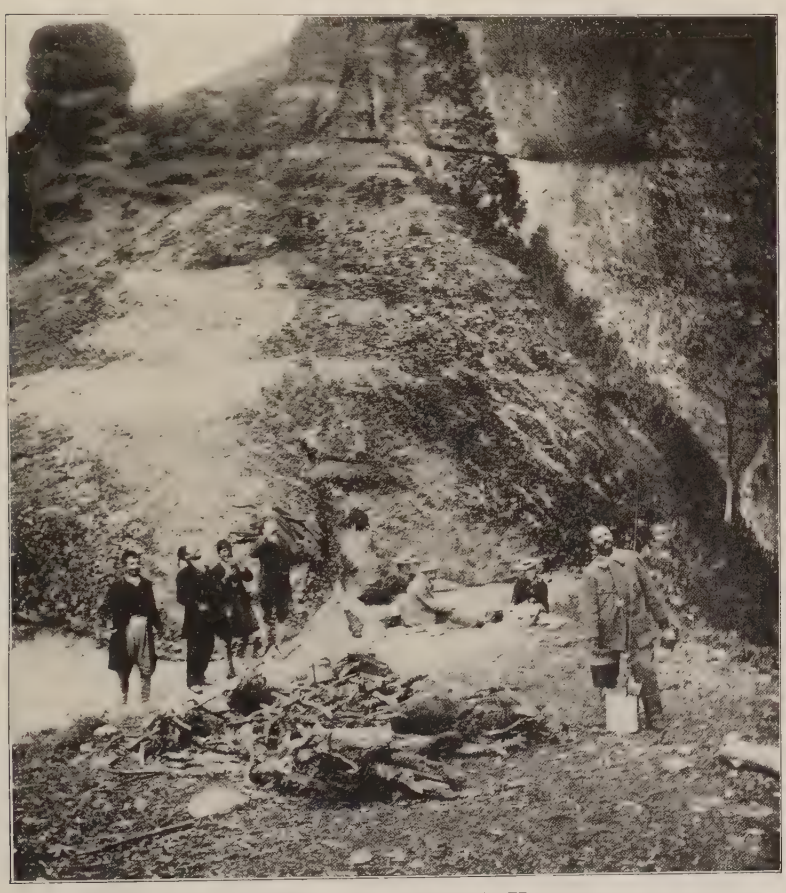
Safely arrived, our first thought is for our interpreter, who is to follow us as soon as the net is lowered for a second time. Let us advance to yonder railing, lean over it, and look

HAGIOS BARLAAM

OUR VOCAL ANNUNCIATORS

THE METEORON

directly down. If you can imagine yourselves doing so, you may be able to find some meaning in the apparently impossible illustration, made by holding the camera out over the rail, and pointing it directly toward the center of the earth. The straight line is the rope ; at its end we see the net, in which our guide is being drawn up. Below, the ground is seen as if represented on a painted map or plan. The white rectangle is our tablecloth, on which our luncheon was spread. A round light spot above it is the top of a straw hat on the head of one of the ladies of our party.



DESCENT OF THE DUMB-WAITER

HALF-WAY UP

THE HOISTING "MACH'NERY"

Meantime the windlass creaks and the old monks pant until the form of Mr. Papadopoulos is silhouetted at the landing window. Then bony hands reach out, grasp the meshes, haul in the net, and liberate the human fish which has nibbled the bait of adventure and been taken a will- ing prey.

PILLARS, PINNACLES, AND PALISADES

To arrive thus oneself is sufficiently trying to the nerves. To witness the arrival of another is almost terrifying and the thought of the departure — the inevitable moment of dropping off — haunts us throughout the brief hour spent in the corridors and chapels of Hagios Barlaam. We find it difficult to disabuse our minds of vague convictions that the hour is come for us to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil; we feel imperatively called to a higher life; we almost resolve to pass the remainder of our days there on that Meteora cliff top, thus escaping all future temptations and — avoiding the necessity of going down again in that net!

A BARLAAMITE

But down we go at last, two dizzy pilgrims in the revolving lift ; then Papadopoulos is let down in similar fashion by the deliberate monks.

Not content with this experience, we attempt to reach the monastery called the Meteoron ; but in answer to our summons, the cracked voice of an old man tosses to us from the tower, in plaintive sentences which seem to fall from the heavens, the astounding statement that there are only two monks left there in the huge buildings of the Meteoron, and that they have not strength between them to haul us to the high perched abode of desolation where they are awaiting eternity.

Greek monasticism, at least in Thessaly, is already a thing of the past. A few more visits from the Angel of

THE MONASTERIES IN THE AIR

Death and these Meteora chapels will no more resound to chanted prayers. The sacred institutions having served the purpose for which they were built will pass away or will soon become mute and stately

ARRIVED

reminders of the good that has been wrought by the church in centuries that are no more.

As we looked for a last time on the weird, fantastic region of

WHERE MONKS LIKE MONKEYS SCRAMBLE UP

the Meteora, its titanic crags crowned by the crumbling fortresses of a faith destined long to survive the ruin of its medieval strongholds, the thought came that just as the Greek faith can look with equanimity upon the loss of its lands and the slow disintegration of its temples, so can the Greek spirit, enduring as a mighty rock, look tranquilly

THE METEORON

upon the petty disasters of the present. The Greek religion is enshrined in the hearts of the Greek people; but the true Greek spirit survives not only in the hearts of Greeks by birth, but in the hearts of all the world's great men of thought and action, men who are Greek by the divine right of mind. The real Greeks of to-day are the men who are

A WEIRD LANDSCAPE

ON THE ROOF OF THESSALY

doing the world's great work, governing our nations, building our cities, irrigating our deserts, constructing our canals, rearing our monuments, painting our pictures, acting our plays, writing our greatest poems and our greatest books. These are the true Greeks of the Universe, animated by the true Greek spirit —the spirit that teaches men to think great thoughts and to create great things.

THE PENEUS

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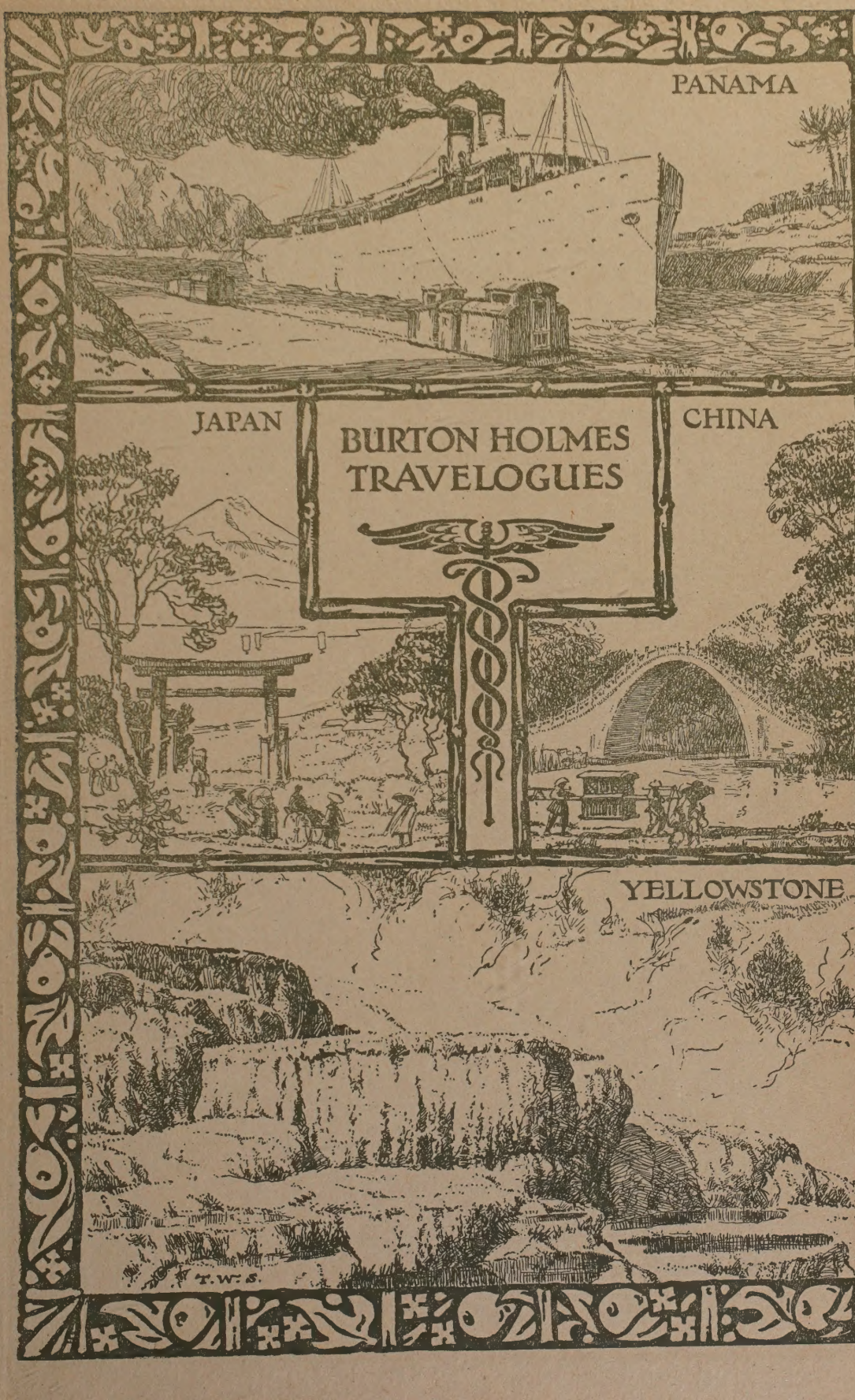
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